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THOMAS
OF
READING:
OR,

The fixe worthie Yeomen
of the West.

Now the sixth time corrected and enlarged

By *T. Daveney*



LONDON,

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1632.





The pleafant Historie of the Sixe worthy Yeomen of the West.



N the Dayes of King Henry the First, who was the first King that instituted the High Court of Parliament, there lived nine Men, which for the Trade of Clothing, were famous thorowout all England. Which Art in thosse Dayes was held in high Reputation, both in respect of the great Riches that thereby was gotten, as also of the Benefit it brought to the whole Common-wealth: the younger Sons of Knights and Gentlemen, to whom their Fathers would leaue no Lands, were most commonly preferred to learne this Trade, to the End, that thereby they might liue in good Estate, and driue forth their Dayes in Prosperity.

Among all Crafts this was the onely Chiefe, for that it was the greatest Merchandise, by the which our Country became famous thorowout all Nations. And it was verily thought, that the one Halfe the Peo- ple

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ple in the Land lived in thofe Dayes thereby, and in such good Sort, that in the Common-wealth there were few or no Beggers at all: poore People, whom God lightly bleffed with moft Children, did by Means of this Occupation fo order them, that by the Time that they were come to be five or feuen Yeeres of Age, they were able to get their owne Bread: Idlenesse was then banifhed our Coast, fo that it was a rare Thing to heare of a Thiefe in thofe Dayes. Therefore it was not without Caufe that Clothiers were then both honoured and loved, among whom thefe nine Persons in this Kings Dayes were of great Credit, viz. *Tho. Cole* of Reading, *Gray of Gloceſter*, *Sutton* of Salifburie, *Fitzallan* of Worcester, (commonly called *William* of Worcester) *Tom Doue* of Exceſter, and *Simon* of Southhampton; alias *Supbroth*: who were by the King call-ed, The Sixe worthy Hufbands of the West. Then were there Three liuing in the North, that is to ſay, *Cutbert* of Kendall, *Hodgekins* of Hallifax, & *Martin Byram* of Mancheſter. Euery one of theſe kept a great Number of Seruants at Worke, Spinners, Carders, Weauers, Fullers, Dyers, Sheeremen, and Row-ers, to the great Admiracion of all thofe that came into their Houſes to behold them.

Now you ſhall vnderſtand, thofe gallant Clothiers, by Reaſon of their dwelling Places, ſeparated themſelues in three feuerall Companies: *Gray* of Gloceſter,

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ter, *William* of Worcester, and *Thomas* of Reading, because their Journey to London was all one Way, they conuersed commonly together: And *Doue* of Excester, *Sutton* of Salisburie, and *Simon* of Southhampton, they in like Sort kept Company the one with the other, meeting euer all together at Bazingstoke: and the three Northerne Clothiers did the like, who commonly did not meet till they came to Bolomes Inne in London.

Moreouer, for the Love and Delight that these Westerne Men had each in others Companie, they did so prouide, that their Waines and themselues would euer meet upon one Day in London at *Iarrats* Hall, surnamed the Gyant, for that hee surpased all other Men of that Age, both in Stature & Strength: whose Meriments and memorable Deeds, I will set downe vnto you in this following Discourse.

How King Henry sought the Fauour of all his Subjects, especially of the Clothiers. CHAP. 1.

THIS King *Henry*, who for his great Learning and Wisedome was called *Beauclarke*, beeing the third Son to the renowned Conquerour: after the Death of his Brother *William Ruffus*, tooke upon him the Gouernment of this Land, in the Absence of his seconde Brother *Robert Duke of Normandie*, who at this Time
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was at Wars amongst the Infidels, and was chosen King of Jerusalem, the which he, for the Loue he bare to his owne Country, refused, and with great Honour returned from the Holy Land; of whose comming when King *Henry* vnderstood, knowing hee would make Claime to the Crowne, fought by all Meanes possible to winne the good Will of his Nobility, and to get the Fauor of the Commons by Courtesie: for the obtaining whereof hee did them many Fauours, thereby the better to strengthen himselfe against his Brother.

It chanced on a Time, as he, with one of his Sonnes, and diuers of his Nobilitie, rode from London towards Wales, to appease the Fury of the Welshmen, which then began to raire themselues in Armes against his Authority, that he met with a great Number of Waines loaden with Cloth, comming to London, and seeing them still drieue one after another so many together, demanded whose they were: the Waine-men answered in this Sort: *Coles* of Reading (quoth they.) Then by and by the King asked another, saying, Whose Cloth is all this? Old *Coles*, quoth hee: and againe anon after he asked the same Question to others, & stil they answered, Old *Coles*. And it is to be remembered, that the King met them in such a Place so narrow and streight, that hee with the Rest of his

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his Traine, were faine to stand as close to the Hedge, whilst the Carts passed by, the which at that Time being in Number aboue Two Hundred, was neere hand an Houre ere the King could get Roome to be gone : so that by his long Stay, he began to be displeased, although the Admiracion of that Sight did much qualifie his Furie ; but breaking out in Discontent, by Reason of his Stay, he said, I thought Old *Cole* had got a Commission for all the Carts in the Country to cary his Cloth. And how if he haue (quoth one of the Wainmen) doth that grieue you, good Sir ? Yes, good Sir, said our King, what say you to that ? The Fellow seeing the King (in asking that Question) to bend his Browes, though he knew not what he was, yet being abasht, he answered thus : Why, Sir, if you be angry, no body can hinder you ; for possible, Sir, you haue Anger at Commandement. The King seeing him in vttering of his Words to quiuere and quake, laughed heartily at him, as well in respect of his simple Answer, as at his Feare : and so soone after the last Wain went by, which gaue present Passage vnto him and his Nobles : and thereupon entring into Communication of the Commoditie of Cloathing, the King gaue Order at his Home Returne, to haue Old *Cole* brought before his Maiestie, to the Intent he might haue Conference with him, noting him to be a Subject of great Ability : but by that Time
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he came within a Mile of Stanes, he met another Company of Waines in like Sort laden with Cloth, whereby the King was driuen into a further Admiration: and demanding whose they were, answere was made in this Sort: They be Good-man *Suttons* of Salisbury, good Sir: and by that Time a Score of them were past, he asked againe, saying: whose are these? *Suttons* of Salisburie, qd. they, and so still, as often as the King asked that Question, they answered, *Suttons* of Salisburie. God send me many such *Suttons*, said the King. And thus the farther he trauelled Westward, more Waines and more he met continually: upon which Occasion he said to his Nobles, That it would neuer grieue a King to die for the Defence of a fertile Countrie and faithfull Subiects. I always thought (quoth he) that Englands Valor was more then her Wealth, yet now I see her Wealth sufficient to maintaine her Valour, which I will seeke to cherish in all I may, and with my Sword keepe my selfe in Possession of that I haue, Kings and Louers con brooke no Partners: and therefore let my Brother *Robert* thinke, that although hee was Heire to England by Birth, yet I am King by Possession. All his Fauourers I must account my Foes, and will serue them as I did the vngratefull Earle of Shrewsbury, whose Lands I have seized, and banisht his Body. But now we will leaue the King to his Iourney into Wales, and waiting his

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Home Returne, in the meane Time tell you the Meet-
ing of these iolly Clothiers at London.

How William of Worcester, Gray of Glocester, and Old Cole of Reading, met all together at Reading, and of their Communication by the Way as they rode to London. CHAP. 2.

WHEN Gray of Glocester and William of Worcester were come to Reading, according to their Cus-
tome, they always called old Cole to haue his Companie to London, who also duely attended their comming, ha-
ving prouided a good Breakefast for them: and when they had well refreshed themselues, they tooke their Horfes and rode on towards the Cittie: and in their Iourney William of Worcester asked them if they had not heard of the Earle of Moraigne his Escape out of the Land? What is he fled? qd. Gray. I muse much at this Matter, being in such great Regard with the King as he was: but I pray you, doe you not know the Cause of his going? qd. Cole. The common Re-
port, quoth Gray, is this, that the couetous Earle, who through a greedy Desire, neuer left begging of the King for one Thing or other, and his Request being now denied him, of meere Obstinacy and wilfull Frowardneffe, hath banished himselfe out of the Land, & quite forsaken the Country of Cornwall, hauing made

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a Vow neuer to set Foote within England againe, and, as Report goeth, he with the late banisht Earle of Shrewsbury, haue ioyned themselues with *Robert Duke of Normandy*, against the King, the which Action of theirs hath inflamed the Kings Wrath, that their Ladies with their Children are quite turned out of Doores succourlesse and friendlesse, so that it is told me, they wander up and downe the Country like forlorne Peopple, and although many doe pitie them, yet few doe releue them.

A lamentable Hearing, qd. *William of Worcester*, & with that casting their Eyes aside, they espyed *Tom Doue* with the Rest of his Companions come riding to meeete them, who as soone as they were come thither, fell into such pleasant Discourses, as did shorten the long Way they had to Colebroke, where alwayes at their comming towards London they dined ; and being once entred into their Inne, according to olde Cus-tome, good Cheere was provided for them : for these Clothiers were the chiefest Guests that traualled along the Way : and this was sure as an Act of Parliament, that *Tom Doue* could not digest his Meat without Muficke, nor drinke Wine without Women, so that his Hostesse being a merry Wench, would oftentimes call in Two or Thre of her Neighbours Wiues to keepe him Company, where, ere they parted, they were made

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as pleasant as Pies. And this being a continual Custome amongst them when they came thither, at length the Womens Husbands beganne to take Exceptions at their Wives going thither : whereupon great Controversie grew betweene them, in such Sort, that when they were most restrained, then they had most Desire to worke their Wills : now gip (quoth they) must we be so tyed to our Taske, that wee may not drinke with our Friends ? fie, fie, vpon these yellow Hose , will no other Die serue your turne ? haue wee thus long bin your Wiues, and doe you now mistrust vs ? verily you eate too much Salt, and that makes you grow cholericke, badde Liuers iudge all Others the like, but in Faith you shall not bridle us so like Asses, but wee will goe to our Friends, when we are sent for, and doe you what you can. Well, quoth their Husbands, if you be so head-strong, we will tame you : it is the Duty of honest Women to obey their Husbands Sayings. And of honest Men (quoth they) to thinke well of their Wives ; but who doe sooner impeach their Credit, then their Husbands charging them, if they doe but smile, that they are subtil ; and if they doe but winke, they account them wily : if sad of Countenance, then fullen : if they be froward, then they are counted Shrewes : and sheepish if they bee gentle : if a Woman keepe her Housfe, then you will say she is melancholy, if shee walke abroade, then you call

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call her a Gadder ; a Puritane, if ſhe be precise ; and a Wanton, if ſhee be pleafant : ſo there is no Woman in the World that knowes how to please you : that we think our felues accurſt to be married Wiues, liuing with ſo many Woes. These men, of whose Company you forewarne vs, are (for aught that euer we faw) both honest and courteous, and in Wealth farre beyond your felues : then what Reafon is there, why we ſhould reſtraine to viſit them ? is their Good-will ſo much to be requited with Scorne, that their Cost may not be counteruailed with our Company ? if a Woman be diſpoſed to play light of Love, alas, alas, doe you thiſke that you can preuent her ? Nay, wee will abide by it, that the Reſtraint of Liberty inforceth Women to be lewd : for where a Woman cannot be truſted, ſhe cannot thiſke her ſelfe beloved, and if not beloved, what Caufe hath ſhe to care for fuch a One ? therefore, Husbands, reforme your Opinions, and doe not worke your owne Woes, without our Discredit. The Clothiers, we tell you, are jolly Fellows, and but in reſpect of our Courteſie, they would ſcorne our Company.

The Men hearing their Wiues ſo well to plead for themſelues, knew not how to anſwer, but faid, they would put the Burden on their Conſciences, if they deale vniuſtly with them, and ſo left them to their owne Wills. The Women hauing thus conquered
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their Husbands Conceits, would not leaue the Fauour of their Friends for Frownes, and as aboue the Rest *Tom Doue* was the most pleafantest, so was he had in most Reputation with the Women, who for his Sake made this Song :

Welcome to Towne, *Tom Doue, Tom Doue,*
The merriest Man aliue,
Thy Company still we loue, we loue,
God grant thee well to thriue.
And neuer will depart from thee,
For better or worse, my Joy,
For thou shalt still haue our good Will,
Gods Blessing on my sweet Boy.

This Song went vp and downe through the whole Country, and at length became a Dance among the common Sort, so that *Tom Doue*, for his Mirth and good Fellowship, was famous in euery Place. Now when they came to London, they were welcome to the vast *Iarrat* the Gyant, & as soone as they were alighted, they were saluted by the Merchants, who waited their comming thither, and alwayes prepared for them a costly Supper, where they commonly made their Bargaine, and vpon euery Bargaine made, they still vsed to send some Tokens to the Clothiers Wiues. The next Morning they went to the Hall, where they met the Northerne Clothiers, who greeted one another in

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in this Sort. What, my Masters of the West, well met: what Cheere? what Cheer? Euen the best Cheere our Merchants could make vs, (quoth *Gray.*) Then you could not chuse but fare well, quoth *Hodgekins*: and you be weary of our Company, adieu, quoth *Sutton*: Not so, said *Martin*, but shall wee not haue a Game ere we goe? Yes faith for an Hundred Pounds. Well said, Old *Cole*, said they: and with that *Cole* and *Gray* went to the Dice with *Martin* and *Hodgekins*; and the Dice running on *Hodgekins* Side, *Coles* Money began to waste. Now by the Masse, quoth *Cole*, my Money shines as bad as Northerne Cloth. When they had played long, *Gray* stopt to it, and recouered againe the Money that *Cole* had lost. But while they were thus playing, the Rest being delighted in contrary Matters, euery Man satisfied his owne Humour.

Tom Doue called for Musicke, *William* of Worcester for Wine, *Sutton* set his Delight in hearing Merry Tales, *Simon* of South-hampton got him into the Kitchen, and to the Pottage Pot he goes, for he esteemed more a Messe of Pottage, than of a Venizon Pasty. Now, Sir, *Cutbert* of Kendall was of an other Mind, for no Meate pleased him so well as Mutton, such as was laced in a red Petticoate. And you shall vnderstand, that alwayes when they went to Dice, they got into Bosoms

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Bosomes Inne ; which was so called of his Name that kept it, who being a foule Slouen, went alwayes with his Nose in his Bosome, and one Hand in his Pocket, the other on his Staffe, figuring forth a Description of cold Winter, for he alwayes wore two Coates, two Caps, two or three Paire of Stockings, and a high Pair of Shooes, ouer the which he drew on a great Pair of lined Slippers, and yet would oft complaine of Cold : wherefore of all Men generally he was called Old Bosome, and his House Bosomes Inne.

This Lump of cold Ice had lately married a young Wife, who was as wily as she was wanton, and in her Company did *Cutbert* onely delight, and the better to make Paflage to his Loue, he would often thus commune with her : I muse, good Wife, quoth he. Good Wife ? quoth she : Verily, Sir, in mine Opinion, there is none good but God, and therefore call me Mistresse. Then said *Cutbert*, Faire Mistris, I haue often mused, that you being a proper Woman, could find in your Heart for to match with such a greazie Carle as this, an euill mannered Mate, a foule Lump of Kitchen-Stuffe, and such a One as is indeede a Scorne of Men ; how can you like him that all Women mislikes ; or loue such a loathsome Creature ? me thinks verily it should grieue you to lend him a Kiffe, much more to lie with him. Indeed, Sir, quoth she, I had but hard Fortune in this respect, but my Friends would have it

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fo, and truly my Liking and my Love towards him are alike, he neuer had the one, nor neuer shall get the other: yet I may fay to you, Before I married him, there were diuers proper young Men that were Sutors vnto me, who loued mee as their Liues, and glad was he that could get my Company; thos were my golden Dayes, wherein my Pleasure abounded, but these Yeeres of Care and Griefe, wherein my Sorrowes excede. Now no Man regards mee, no Man cares for me, and albeit in secret they might beare mee Good-will, yet who dares shew it? and this is a double Griefe, he carries ouer me so iealous a Minde, that I cannot looke at a Man, but presently he accuseth me of Inconstancy, although (I protest) without Caufe.

And in troth, qd. *Cutbert*, he should haue Caufe to complaine for somewhat, were I as you. As sure as I live, and so he shall, quoth she, if he doe not change his Byas. *Cutbert* hearing her say so, began to grow further in requesting her Fauour, wishing he might be her Seruant and secret Friend, and the better to obtaine his Desire, he gaue her diuers Gifts, insomuch that she began Something to listen vnto him: and albeit she liked well of his Speeches, yet would she blame him, and take him up very shhort sometimes for the same, till in the End, *Cutbert* shewed himselfe to be desperate, saying hee would drowne himselfe rather than

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then liue in her Disdaine. O my sweet Heart not so, quoth shee, God forbid I shoulde be the Death of any Man : Comfort thy selfe, kind *Cutbert*, and take this Kiffe in Token of further Kindnesse, and if thou wilst haue my Fauour, thou must be wise and circum-spect, and in my Husbands Sight I would alwayes haue thee to find Fault with my Doings, blame my bad Huswifries, dispraise my Person, and take Exceptions at every Thing, whereby he will be as well pleased, as *Simon* of South-hampton with a Messe of Pottage.

Deare Mistresse, quoth he, I will fulfill your Charge to the vttermost, so that you will not take my Iest in earnest. Shee answered, Thy foulest Speeches I will esteeme the fairest, and take euery Dispraise to be a Praise from thee, turning each Word to the contrary : and so for this Time adieu, good *Cutb.* for Supper Time drawes neere, & it is meet for me to looke for my Meat. With that down comes old Bosome, calling his Wife, saying, Ho, *Winifred*, is Supper ready ? they haue done playing aboue : therefore let the Chamberlaine couer the Table. By & by Husband, qd. she, it shall be done straight-way. How now, my Masters, who wins ? qd. *Cutbert*. Our Money walkes to the West, qd. *Martin* : *Cole* hath woone 40 Pounds of me, and *Gray* hath gotten well : the best is, qd. *Hodgekins*, they will pay for our Supper : then let vs

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haue good Store of Sacke, qd. *Sutton*. Content, said *Cole*, for I promise you, I strie not to grow rich by Dice-playing, therefore call for what you will, I will pay for all. Yea, said *Simon*! Chamberlaine, I pray thee bring a whole Bottle of Pottage for me. Now *Tom Doue* had all the Fidlers at a Becke of his Finger, which follow him up and down the City, as diligent as little Chickens after a Hen, and made a Vow, that there shoulde want no Musicke. And at that Time there liued in London a Musician of great Reputation, named *Reior*, who kept his Seruants in such costly Garments, that they might seeme to come before any Prince. Their Coates were all of one Colour; and it is said, that afterward the Nobility of this Land, noting it for a seemely Sight, vised in like Maner to keepe their Men all in one Liuery. This *Reior* was the most skilfullest Musician that liued at that Time, whose Wealth was uery great, so that all the Instruments whereon his Seruants plaid, were richly garnished with Studdes of Siluer, and some Gold: the Bowes belonging to their Violines were all likewise of pure Siluer. Hee was also for his Wisedome called to great Office in the City, who also builded (at his owne Cost) the Priory & Hospitall of S. Bartholomew in Smithfield. His Seruants being the best Conforts in the City, were by *Tom Doue* appointed to play before the young Princes. Then Supper being brought to

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to the Boord, they all sat down, and by and by after comes vp their Oast, who tooke his Place among them : and anon after, the Good-wife in a red Peti-cote & a Wastcoate, comes among them as white as a Lilly, saying, My Masters, you are welcome, I pray you be merry. Thus falling close to their Meate, when they had well fed, they found Leysure to talke one with another : at that Time *Cub.* began thus to find Fault, Ywis, my Oast, quoth he, you haue a wife Huswife to your Wife, heere is Meate dreft on a new Fashion? God sends Meate, and the Deuill sends Cooks. Why what ailes the Meate, quoth she, serues it not your Turnes? better Men then your selfe are content withall, but a paulyry Companion is euer worst to please. Away, you sluttish Thing, qd. *Cutbert,* your Husband hath a sweet Jewell of you : I maruell such a graue ancient Man would match himselfe with such a young Giglot, that hath as much Handsomenes in her as good Huswifry, which is iust nothing at all. Well, Sir, said shee, in regard of my Husbands Presence I am loth to agrauate Anger, otherwise I would tell thee thy owne. Goe to, what needs all this, quoth the Company? in good Faith, *Cubert,* you are to b'ame, you find Fault where none is. Tush, I must speake my Mind, quoth *Cubert,* I cannot dissemble, I trust the good Man thinkes neuer the worse of me : so I have his good Will, what the foule Euill care I
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for his Wifes. Enough, quoth *Tom Doie*, let us with Musicke remoue these Brabbles, we meane to be merry, and not melancholy. Then, said old *Cole*, Now trust me, *Cutbert*, we will haue your Oastesse and you Friends ere we part: here, Woman, I drinke to you, and regard not his Words, for he is babbling wherefoeuer he comes. Quoth the Woman, Nothing grieues me so much, as that hee should thus openly checke mee: if he had found any Thing amisse, he might haue spied a better Time to tell me of it than nowe, ywis he need not thrust my bad Huswifrie into my Husbands Head, I liue not so quietly with him, God wot: and with that she wept. Come, *Cutbert*, quoth they, drinke to her, and shake Hands and be Friends. Come on, you puling Baggage, quoth he, I drinke to you, here will you pledge mee and shake Hands? No, (quoth shee) I will see thee choackt first, shake Hands with thee? I will shake Hands with the Deuill as sooon. Goe to, said her Husband, you shall shake Hands with him then: If you will not shake Hands, Ile shake you: what, you young Hufwife? Well, Husband, said she, it becomes a Woman to obey her Husband, in regard whereof I drink to him. Thats well said, quoth the Company: & so she tooke her Leaue & went downe. And within a while after they paid the Shot, and departed thence to *Iarrats* Hall, where they went to their Lodging; and the

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next Day they tooke their way homewards all together : and comming to Colebroke, they tooke vp their Lodging : and it was *Coles Custome* to deliuier his Money to the Goodwife of the House to keepe it till Morning, which in the End turned to his utter Destruction, as hereafter shall be shewed.

How Grayes Wife of Gloucester, with One or Two more of her Neighbours, went to the Faire, where Servants came to be hired, & how she tooke the Earle of Shrewsburies Daughter into her Servuice. CHAP. 3.

IT was wont to be an old Custome in Gloucestershire, that at a certaine Time in the Yeere, all such young Men and Maidens as were out of Service, resorted to a Faire that was kept neere Gloucester, there to be ready for any that would come to hire them, the young Men stood all on a Row on the one Side, and the Maidens on the other. It came to passe, that the Earle of Shrewsburies Daughter, whose Father was lately banished, being driven into great Distresse, and weary with Trauell, as one whose delicate Life was neuer vsed to such Toyle, fate her downe vpon the High-way Side, making this Lamentation :

O false and deceitfull World ! quoth she ; who is in thee that wishes not to be rid of thee, for thy Extremities are great ? Thou art deceitfull to all, and trusty to none. Fortune is thy Treasurer, who is like thy selfe,

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selfe, wauering and vnconstant, she setteth up Tyrants, beateth down Kings ; giveth Shame to some, and Renowne to others : Fortune giveth these Evils, and we see it not : with her Hands she toucheth vs, & we feele it not : she treads vs vnder Foot, and we know it not : she speakes in our Eares, and we heare her not : she cries aloud, and we vnderstand her not : And why ? because we know her not, until Misery doth make her manifest.

Ah, my deare Father, well maist thou doe. Of all Misfortunes it is most vnhappy to be fortunate : and by this Misfortune came my fall. Was euer good Lady brought to this Extremity ? What is become of my rare Jewels, my rich Aray, my sumptuous Fare, my waiting Seruants, my many Friends, and all my vaine Pleasures ? my Pleasure is banisht by Displeasure, my Friends fled like Foes, my Seruants gone, my feasting turned to fasting, my rich Array consumed to Raggis, and my Jewels decke out my chieffest Enemies : therefore of all Things the meanest State is best, Pouerty with Surety is better then Honour mixt with Feare : seeing God hath allotted me to this Misery of Life, I will frame my Heart to embrace Humility, and carry a Mind answerable to my Misfortunes : fie on this vaine Title of Ladyship, how little doth it auaile the distressed ? No, no, I must therefore forget my Birth and Parentage, and think no

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more on my Fathers House. Where I was wont to bee serued, now will I learne to serue, and plaine *Meg* shall be my Name ; good Lord grant I may get a good Seruice, nay any Seruice shall serue, where I may haue Meat, Drinke, and Apparell. She had no sooner spoken these Words, but she spied a Couple of Maidens more comming towards her, who were going to the Faire ; and bidding her good Morrow, asked her if she went to the Faire. Yea, mary, qd. she, I am a poore Mans Child that is out of Seruice, and I heare that at the Statute, Folkes doe come of Purpose to hire Seruants. True it is, said the Maidens, and thither goe we for the fame Purpose, and would be glad of your Company. With a good Will, and I am right glad of yours, said she, beseeching you, good Maidens, you will doe me the Fauour, to tell me what Service were best for me : for the more too blame my Parents, they would neuer put me forth to know any Thing. Why what can you doe ? (quoth the Maidens) can you brew and bake, make Butter and Cheeze, and reape Corne well ? No verily, said *Margaret*, but I would be right glad to learne to doe any Thing whatsoever it be. If you could spin or card, said another, you might do excellent well with a Clothier, for they are the best Seruices that I know ; there you shall be sure to fare well, and so live merrily.

Then

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Then *Margaret* wept, saying, alas, what shall I doe ? I was neuer brought vp to these Things. What, can you doe nothing ? quoth they. No truly (quoth she) that is good for any Thing, but I can read and write, and sowe, some Skill I haue in my Needle, and a little on my Lute : but this, I see, will profit me nothing. Good Lord, quoth they, are you bookish ? wee did neuer heare of a Maide before that could reade and write. And although you can doe no other Thing, yet possible you may get a Seruice, if you can behaue your selfe manerly. I pray you, qd. another, seeing you are bookish, will you doe so much as to reade a Love-Letter that is fent me ? for I was at a Friends of mine with it, and he was not at Home, and so I know not what is in it. I pray you let me see it, quoth *Margaret*, and I will shew you. Wherupon she readeth as followeth.

O *Lenny*, my Joy, I die for thy Loue,
And now I heare say that thou dost remoue :
And therefore, *Lenny*, I pray thee recite,
Where shall I meete thee foone at Night ?

For why, with my Master no more will I stay,
But for thy Loue I will runne away :
O, *Lenny*, *Lenny*, thou puttest me to paine,
That thou no longer wilt here remaine.

I will

of Thomas of Reading.

I will weare out my Shooes of Neats-Leather,
But thou and I will meete together,
And in spight of Fortune, Rat, or Mouse,
We will dwell together in one House.

For who doth not Esteeme of thee,
Shall haue no Seruice done of me :
Therefore, good *Lenny*, haue a Care,
To meete poore *Fragment* at the Faire.

Now, alas, good Soule (quoth *Lenny*) I thinke he be
the kindest young Man in the World. The Rest an-
swered, that he seemed no lesse, and surely it appeareth
that he is a pretty witty Fellow, quoth one of them,
how finely hee hath written his Letter in Rime ; trust
me, I will giue you a good Thing, and let me haue a
Copy of it to send to my Sweet-heart : that you shall
with all my Heart : & so conming to the Faire, they
tooke vp their Standing.

Within a while after, Goodwife *Gray* of Gloucester
came thither to store her selfe of diuers Commodities :
and when she had bought what she would, she told
her Neighbour she had great Need of a Maid-Servant
or Twaine : therefore, qd. she, good Neighbour goe
with me, and let me haue your Opinion. With a good
Will, said her Neighbour, and together they went,
and looking and viewing the Maidens ouer, she tooke
speciall

The pleafant Hiftorie

speciall Notice of *Margaret*. Belieue me, quoth she, there stands a very proper Maiden, and one of a modest and comely Countenance. Verily, said her Neighbour, so she is, as ever I lookest upon.

The Maiden seeing them to view her so well, was so abashed, that a scarlet Colour ouerspred her lilly Cheekes, which the Woman perciuing, came vnto her, and asked if she were willing to serue. The Maid with a low Curtesie, and a most gentle Speech, answere, it was the onely Caufe of her comming. Can you spinne or card? said Good-wife *Gray*. Truly, Dame, said she, though my Cunning therein be but small, my Good-will to learne is great, and I trust my Diligence shall content you. What Wages will you take? quoth Good-wife *Gray*. I will referre that, said *Margaret*, to your Conscience and Courtesie, desiring no more then what I shall deserue. Then asking what Country-woman she was, the Maiden wept, saying, Ah, good Dame, I was untimely borne in Shropshire, of poore Parents, and yet not so needy as unfortunate, but Death hauing ended their Sorrowes, hath left me to the Cruelty of these eniuious Times, to finish my Parents Tragedy with my Troubles. What, Maiden, qd. her Dame, haue you a Care to doe your Busines, and to live in God's Feare, and you shall haue no Care to regard Fortunes Frownes, and so they went Home together.

Now,

of Thomas of Reading.

Now, so soone as the Good-man saw her, hee asked his Wife where she had that Maiden? She said, at the Faire. Why then, quoth he, thou hast brought all the Faire away, and I doubt it were better for vs, to fende the Faire to another Towne, than to keepe the Faire here. Why, Man, quoth she, what mean you by that? Woman, I meane this, that she will prove a Loadstone, to draw the Hearts of all my Men after her, & so we shall have wife Seruice done of all Sides. Then said his Wife, I hope, Husband, *Margaret* will haue a better Care both to her owne Credit, and our Commodity then so, and so let her alone to looke to such Matters. Is thy Name *Margaret*? quoth her Master: proper is thy Name to thy Person, for thou art a Pearle indeed, orient, and rich in Beauty.

His Wife hearing him say so, began to change her Opinion: What, Husband (quoth she) is the Wind at that Doore? Begin you to like your Maid so well? I doubt I had most need to looke to your selfe: before God, I had rather then an Angell I had chosen some other: but heare you, Maid, you shall packe hence, I will not nourish a Snake in my Bosome, and therefore get you gone, I will none of you, provide a Service where you may.

The Maiden hearing her fay so, fell downe on her Knees, and besought her, saying, O, sweet Dame, be not so cruell to me, to turne me out of Doores, now: alas,

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alas, I know not where to goe, or what to doe, if you forfake me. O let not the fading Beauty of my Face dispoile me of your Fauour : for rather then that shall hinder my Seruice, this my Knife shall foone disfigure my Face, and I will banish Beauty as my greatest Enemy. And with that her abundant Tears stopped her Speech, that she could not utter one Word more.

The Woman seeing this, could not harbour any longer, nor could her Master stay in the Roome for weeping. Well, *Margaret*, said her Dame (little knowing that a Lady kneeled before her) vsing thyselfe well, I will keepe thee, and thou shalt haue my Good-will if thou gouern thyselfe with Wisedome ; & so she sent her about her Busynesse. Her Husband comming to Supper said, How now, Wife, art thou so doubtfull of me, that thou haft put away thy Maiden ? I wis (qd. she) you are a wife Man, to stand praising of a Maidens Beauty before her Face ; & you a wife Woman, qd. he, to grow iealous without a Cause. So to Supper they went, and because *Margaret* shewed her selfe of finest Behaviour aboue the Rest, she was appointed to waite on the Table. And it is to be vnderstood, that *Gray* did neuer eate his Meat alone, but still had some of his Neighbours with him, before whom he called his Maid, saying, *Margaret*, come hither. Now because there was another of the same Name in the House, shée made Answere, I call not you, Maiden,

of Thomas of Reading.

Maiden, quoth he, but *Margaret* with the lilly-white Hand. After which Time she was euer called so.

How the Kings Maiestie sent for the Clothiers, and of the sundry Fauours which he did them. CHAP. 4.

King Henry providing for his Voyage into France, against King *Lewis* and *Robert* Duke of Normandie his owne Brother, committed the Gouvernment of the Realme in his Absence, to the Bishop of *Salisbury*, a Man of great Wisdome and Learning, whom the King esteemed highly, and afterward he thought good to send for the chiefe Clothiers of England, who according to the Kings Appointment came to the Court, and hauing Licence to come before his Maiestie, he spake to this Effect.

The Strength of a King is the Loue and Friendship of his People, and he gouernes ouer his Realme most surely, that ruleth Justice with Mercy: for he ought to feare many, whom many doe feare: therefore the Gouernours of the Commonwealth ought to obserue two speciall Precepts: the One is, that they so maintaine the Profit of the Commons, that whatsoeuer in their Calling they doe, they referre it thereunto: the other, that they be alwayes as well carefull ouer the whole Common-wealth, as ouer any Part thereof; lest, while they uphold the one, the other be brought to vtter Decay.

And

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And forasmuch as I doe vnderstand, and haue partly feene, that you the Clothiers of England are no small Benefit to the Wealth-publike, I thought it good to know from your owne Mouthes, if there be any Thing not yet granted that may benefit you, or any other Thing to be remoued that doth hurt you.

The great Desire I haue to maintaine you in your Trades, hath mooued me hereunto. Therefore boldly say what you would haue in the one Thing or the other, & I will grant it you.

With that, they all fell downe vpon their Knees, and desired God to faue his Maiestie, and withall, requested three Dayes Respit to put in their Answere: which was granted. And thereupon they departed.

When the Clothiers had well considered of these Matters, at length they thought meete to request of his Maiestie for their first Benefit, that all the Cloth-Measures thorow the Land might be of one Length, whereas to their great Disadvantage before, euery good Towne had a feuerall Measure, the Difficulty thereof was such, that they could not keepe them in Memory, nor know how to keepe their Reckonings. The seconde Thing whereof they found themselves grieved, was this, that the People would not take crackt Money, though it were neuer so good Silver; whereupon it came to passe, that the Clothiers and diuers Others, receiuing great Summes of Money, doe take

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take among it much crackt Money, it serued them to no Vfe, because it would not goe current, but lay upon their Hands without Profit or Benefit, whereof they prayed Reformation. The Third was a Griefe, whereof *Hodgekins* of Halifax complained, and that was, That whereas the Towne of Halifax lived altogether upon Cloathing, and by the Reason of false Borderers, and other euill-minded Persons, they were oft robbed, and had their Clothes carried out of their Fields, where they were drying: That it would please his Maiestie to graunt the Towne this Priuiledge, That whatsoeuer he was that was taken stealing their Cloth, might presently without any further Tryall be hanged vp. When the Day of their Appearance approached, the Clothiers came before the King, and deliuered vp their Petition in writing, which his Maiestie most graciously perusing, said, hee was ready to fulfill their Request: and therefore for the first Point of their Petition, he called for a Staffe to be brought him, and measuring thereupon the iust Length of his own Arme, delivered it to the Clothiers, saying, This Measure shall be called a Yard, and no other Measure thorowout all the Realme of England shall be vsed for the same, and by this shall Men buy and sell, and we will so provide, that whosoever he be that abuseth our Subjects by any false Measure, that he shall not onely pay a Fine for the same to the King, but also haue his Body

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Body punished by Imprisonment. And as concerning the seconde Point of your Petition, because of my sudden Departure out of the Land, I know not better how to ease you of this Griefe, (of crackt Money) this Decree I make, because they account crackt Money not current, I say, none shall be current but crackt Money. And therefore I will give present Charge, that all the Money thorow the Land shall be slit, and so you shall suffer no Loffe.

But now for your last Request for the Towne of Halifax : where by Theeves your Clothes are so often stolne from you, seeing the Lawes already prouided in that Cafe, are not sufficient to keepe Men in awe, it is indeed high Time to haue sharper Punishment for them.

With that *Hodgekins* vnmannerly interrupted the King, saying in broad Northerne Speech, Yea, gude Faith, mai Liedg, the faule Eule of mai Saule, giff any Thing will keepe them whiat, till the Karles be hanged up by the Cragge. What the Dule care they for boaring their Eyne, sea lang as they may gae groping vp and downe the Country like fause lizar Lownes, begging and cracking ?

The King smiling to heare this rough-hewne Fellow make this Reply : Content thee, *Hodgekins*, for we will have Redrefle for all : and albeit that hanging of Men was neuer seene in England, yet seeing the corrupt

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corrupt World is growne more bold in all Wickednesse, I think it not amisse to ordaine this Death for such Malefactors: and peculiarly to the Towne of Halifax I give this Priviledge, That whosoeuer they finde stealing their Cloth, being taken with the Goods, that without further Iudgement, they shall be hanged vp.

Thus (said our King) I haue granted what you request, and if hereafter you find any other Thing that may be good for you, it shall be granted; for no longer would I desire to liue among you, than I haue Care for the good of the Commonwealth: at which Words ended, the King rose from his royall Throne, while the Clothiers on their Knees prayed for both his Health and happy Successe, and shewed themselves most thankfull for his Highnesses Fauour. His Maiestie bending his Body towards them, that at his Home Returne, he would (by the Grace of God) visit them.

How the Clothiers had provided a sumptuous Feast for the Kings Sonnes, Prince William and Prince Robert, at Gerrards Hall: shewing also what Chance befell Cutbert of Kendall at that same Instant. CHAP. 5.

THE Clothiers departing from the Court in a merry Mind, ioyfull of their good Successe, each one to other praised and magnified the Kings great Wife-

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dome and Vertue, commanding also his Affability and gentle Disposition, so that *Hodgekins* affirmed on his Faith, that hee had rather speake to the Kings Maief- tie, than to many Justices of Peace. Indeed (said *Cole*) he is a most mild and mercifull Prince, and I pray God he may long raigne ouer us. Amen said the Rest.

Then faid *Cole*, My Masters, shall we forget the great Courtesie of the Kings Sonnes, thofe sweet and gentle Princes, that still shewed us Fauour in our Suite? In my Opinion, it were Reafon to gratifie them in fome Sort, that we may not vtterly bee con- demned of Ingratitude: wherefore (if you thinke good) we will prepare a Banquet for them at our Oast *Garrats*, who, as you know, hath a faire Houfe, and goodly Roomes: Befides, the Man himfelfe is a most couragious Mind and good Behaviour, fufficient to entertain a Prince; his Wife also is a dainty fine Cooke: all which confidered, I know not a fitter Place in London. Tis true, quoth *Sutton*, and if the Rest be content, I am pleased it fhall be fo. At this they all anfwered, Yea; for, quoth they, it will not be paſſing Forty Shillings a Piece, and that we fhall recouer in our crackt Money.

Being thus agreed, the Feaſt was prepared. Tom Doue, quoth they, we will commit the prouiding of Musicke to thee: and I, faid *Cole*, will inuite diuers
of

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of our Merchants and their Wiues to the same. That is well remembred, said *Gray*. Vpon this they called to their Oast and Oastesse, shewing their Determination, who most willingly said, all Things should be made ready, but I would haue two Dayes Liberty, said the Good-wife, to prepare my House and other Things. Content, said the Clothiers, in the meane Space we will bid our Guests, and dispatch our other Affaires. But *Simon* of Southampton charged his Oastesse, that in any Cafe she should not forget to make good Store of Pottage. It shall be done, quoth she.

It is to be remembered, that while this Preparation was in hand, that *Cutb.* of Kendall had not forgot his Kindnes to his Oastesse of Bosoms Inne. Therefore finding Time conuenient when her Husband was over-seeing his Hay-makers, hee greeted her in this Sort, Sweet Oastesse, though I were the last Time I was in Towne over-bold with you, yet I hope it was not so offensive to you as you made shew for. Bold, my *Cutbert?* quoth she, thou haft vowed thy self my Servant: and so being, you are not to bee blamed for doing what I wild you. By my Honesty, I could not chuse but smile to my selfe, so foone as I was out of their Sight, to thinke how prettily you began to brabble. But now, quoth he, we will change our Chidings
to

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to Kissings, and it vexeth me that these Cherry Lipps should be subiect to such a Lobcocke as thy Husband.

Subiect to him? quoth she; in faith, Sir, no, I will haue my Lips at as much Liberty as my Tongue, the one to say what I list, and the other to touch whom I like: In Troth, shall I tell thee, *Cutbert*, the Churles Breath smelles so strong, that I care as much for kissing of him, as for looking on him: it is such a mis-shapen Miser, and such a Bundle of Beastlinesse, that I can neuer thinke on him without spitting. Fie upon him, I would my Friends had carried me to my Grave, when they went with me to the Church, to make him my Husband. And so shedding a few dissembling Teares, she stopt. What, my sweet Mistresse, (quoth he) weepe you? Nay, sit downe by my Side, and I will sing thee one of my Countrey Jigges to make thee merry. Wilt thou in Faith? (quoth she.) Yes, verily, said *Cutbert*: And in Troth, quoth she, if you fall a singing, I will sing with you. That is well, you can so suddenly change your Notes, quoth *Cutbert*, then haue at it.

Man. **L**ONG haue I lou'd this bonny Lasse,
Yet durst not shew the same.

Wom. Therein you proue your selfe an Asse,
Man. I was the more to blame.

Yet

of Thomas of Reading.

Yet still will I remaine to thee,
Trang dilly do, trang dilly :
Thy Friend and Louer secretly,
Wom. Thou art my owne sweet Bully.

Man. But when shall I enjoy thee,
Delight of thy faire Loue ?

Wom. Euen when thou seest that Fortune doth
All manner Lets remoue.

Man. O, I will fold thee in my Armes,
Trang dilly do, trang dilly,
And keepe thee so from sudden Harmes,
Wom. Thou art my owne sweet Bully.

Wom. My Husband he is gone from Home,
You know it very well.

Man. But when will he returne againe ?

Wom. In Truth I cannot tell.
If long he keepe him out of Sight,
Trang dilly do, trang dilly,
Be sure thou shalt haue thy Delight,

Man. Thou art my bonny Lassie.

While they were singing this Song, her Husband
being on a sudden come Home, stood secretly in a
Corner and heard all, and blessing himselfe with both
his Hands, said, O abominable Dissimulation ! mon-
strous Hypocrisie ! and are you in this Humour ? can

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you brawle together and sing together? Well, qd. hee, I will let them alone, to see a little more of their Knauery. Neuer did Cat watch Mouse so narrowly as I will watch them. And so going into the Kitchen, he asked his Wife if it were not Dinner-time. Euen by and by, Husband, (quoth she) the Meat will be ready. Presently after comes in *Hodgekins* and *Martin*, who straight asked for *Cutbert* of Kendall. Answer was made, that he was in his Chamber. So when they had called him, they went to Dinner: then they requested that their Oast and Oastesse would sit with them.

Husband, said she, you may goe if you please: but as for me, I will desire Pardon. Nay, Good-wife, goe vp, said her Husband. What, Woman, you must beare with your Guests. Why, Husband, qd. she, doe you thinke that any can beare the Flirts and Fromps which that Northerne Tike gaue me the last Time he was in Towne; now, God forgiue me, I had as lief see the Diuell as to see him: therefore, good Husband, goe vp your selfe, & let me alone, for in Faith, I shall neuer abide that Jacke while I liue. Vpon these Words away went her Husband, and though he said little, he thought the more. Now when he came up, his Guests bade him welcome. I pray you sit downe, good mine Oast, quoth they; where is your Wife? What will she sit with vs? No, verily, said he, the foolish Woman

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man hath taken such a Displeasure against *Cutberi*, that she sweares she will neuer come in his Company. Is it so? said the other, then trust me we are well agreed: and I sweare by my Fathers Sole, qd. hee, that were it not meere for Good-will to you, then Loue to her, I would neuer come to your Housē meere. I belieue it well, said old *Bosome*. And so with other Communication they droue out the Time, till Dinner was ended.

After they were risen, *Martin* & *Hodgekins* got them forth about their Affaires, but *Cutb.* took his Oast by the Hand, saying, My Oast, Ile goe talke with your Wife: for my Part I thought we had bin Friends: but seeing her Stomacke is so big, and her Heart so great, I will see what she will say to me; and with that he stept into the Kitchen, saying, God speed you, Oastis. It must be when you are away then, said she. What is your Reasōn? said the other. Because God neuer comes where Knaues are present. Gip, goodly Draggletaile, qd. he, had I such a Wife, I would present her Tallow-Face to the Deuill for a Candle. With that she bent her Browes, & like a fury of Hell began to flie at him, saying, Why, you gag-tooth Jacke, you blinking Companion, get thee out of my Kitchen quickly, or with my powdred Beefe-Broth I will make your Pate as bald as a Fryers.

Get

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Get me gone ? quoth he, thou shalt not bid me twice : out, you dirty Heeles ! you will make your Husbands Haire growe thorow his Hood I doubt : and with that he got him into the Hall, and sat him downe on the Bench by his Oast, to whom hee said, 'Tis pittie, my Oast, that your aged Yeeres, that loues Quietnesse, should be troubled with such a scolding Queane. I, God help me, God help me, quoth the old Man, and so went towards the Stable : which his Wife watching, suddenly stept out and gaue *Cutbert* a Kiffe.

Within an Hour after, the old Man craftily called for his Nag to ride to Field : but as soone as he was gone, *Cutbert* and his Oastesse were such good Friends, that they got into one of the Ware-houfes, and lockt the Doore to them : but her Husband hauing set a Spie for the Purpose, suddenly turned backe, and call'd for a Capcase which lay in the Warehouse. The Seruant could not find the Key by any Meanes. Whereupon hee called to haue the Locke broke open. Which they within hearing, opened the Doore of their owne Accord. So soone as her Husband espied her in that Place, with Admiracion he said, O Passion of my Heart, what doe you here ? what, you Two that cannot abide one another, what make you so close together ? is your Chiding and Rayling, Brabling and Brauling,

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Brauling, come to this? O what Diffemblers are these! Why, my Oast, qd. *Cutbert*, what need you take the Matter so hot? I gaue a Cheeſe to my Country-man, *Hodgekins*, to lay vp, and deliuered it to your Wife to be keept; and then is it not Reason that ſhe ſhould come and ſeeke me my Cheeſe? O, quoth the old Man, belike the Dore was lockt, because the Cheeſe ſhould not run away. The Doore, ſaid his Wife, unknown to vs clapt to it ſelfe, and hauing a Spring-Locke, was preſently fast. Well, Huswife, qd. he, I will giue you as much Credit as a Crocadile, but as for your Companion, I will teach him to come hither to looke Cheeſes.

And with that he cauſed his Men to take him preſently, and to bind him Hand and Foot. Which being done, they drew him vp in a Basket into the Smoky Louer of the Hall, and there they did let him hang all that Night, euen till the next Day Dinner-time, when he ſhould haue beene at the Banquet with the Princes: for neither *Hodgekins* nor *Martin* could intreat their inflamed Oast to let him downe.

And in ſuch a Heate was hee driuen with drawing him vp, that he was faine to caſt off his Gownes, his Coates, and two Paire of his Stockings, to coole himſelfe, making a Vow, he ſhould hang there ſeven Yeeres, except the Kings Sons came in Perfon to beg his Pardon, which moſt of all grieued *Cutb.* When

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Cole and the Rest of the Western Yeomen heard here-of, they could not chuse but laugh, to thinke that he was so taken tardy.

The young Princes hauing giuen Promise to be with the Clothiers, kept their Houre, but when all the Rest went to giue them Entertainment, *Simon* was so busie in supping his Pottage, that he could not spare so much Time. Which when the Princes saw, with a smilling Countenance they said, Sup, *Simon*, theres good Broth: Or else beshrew our Oastesse, quoth he, neuer looking behind him to see who spake, till the Prince clapt him on the Shoulder. But, good Lord, how blanke he was when hee spied them, knowing not how to excuse the Matter.

Well, the Princes hauing ended their Banquet, *Garrat* comes, and with One of his Hands tooke the Table of Sixteen Foote Long quite from the Ground ouer their Heads, from before the Princes, and set it on the other Side of the Hall, to the great Admiracion of all them that beheld it.

The Princes being then ready to depart, the Clothiers moued them in pleasant Maner, to be good to One of their Company, that did neither sit, lie, nor stand. Then he must needs hang, qd. the Princes. And so he doth, most excellent Princes, qd. they; and therewithall told them the whole Matter. When they heard the Storie, downe to *Bosomes* Inne they goe, where

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where looking vp into the Roofe, spied poore *Cutbert* pinned vp in a Basket, and almost smoaked to Death, who although he were greatly ashamed, yet most pitifully desired that they would get him Release.

What is his Trespaſſe? ſaid the Prince. Nothing, if it ſhall like your Grace, qd. he, but for looking for a Cheeſe: But hee could not find it without my Wife, ſaid the Good-man: the Villaine had lately dined with Mutton, and could not digest his Meate without Cheeſe, for which Caufe I haue made him to fast theſe twenty Houres, to the End he may haue a better Stomacke to eate his Dinner, then to vſe Dalliance.

Let me intreate you, quoth the Prince, to release him: and if euer hereafter you catch him in the Corne, clappe him in the Pownd. Your Grace ſhall request or command any Thing at my Hand, ſaid the old Man: and ſo *Cutbert* was let downe vnbound, but when he was loose, he vowed neuer to come within that Houſe more. And it is ſaid, the old Man *Boſome* ordained, that in Remembrance of this Deed, euerie Yeere once all ſuch as came thither to ask for Cheeſes, ſhould be ſo ferued: which Thing is to this Day kept.

How

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*How Simons Wife of Southampton, being wholly bent to
Pride and Pleasure, requested her Husband to see
London, which being granted, how she got Good-wife
Sutton of Salisbury to goe with her, who tooke Crab
to go along with them, and how he prophesied of many
Things. CHAP. 6.*

THE Clothiers being all come from London, *Suttons* Wife of South-hampton, who was with her Husband very mery and pleasant, brake her Mind vnto him in this Sort :

Good Lord, Husband, will you neuer be so kind as let me goe to London with you? shall I be pend vp in South-hampton, like a Parrat in a Cage, or a Capon in a Coope? I would request no more of you in Lieu of all my Paines, Carke and Care, but to haue one Weeks Time to see that faire City: what is this Life, if it be not mixt with some Delight? and what Delight is more pleasing then to see the Fashions and Maners of unknowne Places? Therefore, good Husband, if thou louest me, deny not this simple Request. You know I am no common Gadder, nor haue oft troubled you with Trauell. God knowes, this may be the last Thing that euer I shall request at your Hands.

Woman, quoth he, I would willingly satisfie your Desire, but you know it is not conuenient for both of vs to be Abroad, our Charge is so great, and therefore

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fore our Care ought not be small. If you will goe your selfe, One of my Men shall goe with you, and Money enough you shall haue in your Purfe: but to goe with you my selfe, you see my Businesse will not permit me.

Husband, said she, I accept your gentle Offer, and it may be I shall intreat my Gossip, Sutton, to goe along with me. I shal be glad, qd. her Husband, prepare your selfe when you will.

When she had obtained this Licence, she sent her Man *Welfell* to Salisbury, to know of Good-wife *Sutton* if shee would keepe her Company to London. *Suttons* Wife being as willing to goe, as she was to request, neuer rested till shee had gotten Leaue of her Husband; the which when she had obtained, casting in her Mind their Pleasure would bee small, being but they Twaine: thereupon the wily Woman sent Letters by collericke *Cracke*, her Man, both to *Grayes* Wife, and *Fitzallens* Wife, that they would meet them at Reading, who liking well of the Match, consented, and did so prouide, that they met according to Promise at Reading, and from thence with *Coles* Wife they went altogether, with each of them a Man to London, each one taking vp their Lodging with a feuerall Friend.

When the Merchants of London vnderstood they were in Towne, they inuited them euery Day Home to

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to their owne Houses, where they had delicate good Cheere: and when they went Abroad to see the Commodities of the City, the Merchants Wiues euer bore them Company, being attired most dainty and fine: which when the Clothiers Wiues did see, it grieued their Hearts they had not the like.

Now when they were brought into Cheapside, there with great Wonder they beheld the Shops of the Goldsmiths; and on the other Side, the wealthy Mercers, whose Shops shined with all Sorts of coloured Silkes: in Watling-street they viewed the great Number of Drapers: in Saint *Martins*, Shoomakers: at Saint *Nicholas* Church, the Flesh Shambles: at the End of the Old Change, the Fish-mongers: in Candleweeke-street, the Weauers: then came into the Jewes-street, where all the Jewes did inhabite: then came they to Blackwel-hall, where the Country Clothiers did vse to meeete.

Afterwards they proceeded, and came to S. *Pauls* Church, whose Steeple was so hie, that it seemed to pierce the Clowdes, on the Top whereof was a great and mighty Weather-cocke of cleane Silver, the which notwithstanding seemed as small as a Sparrow to Mens Eyes, it stood so exceeding High, the which goodly Weathercocke was afterwards stolen away by a cunning Cripple, who found Meanes one Night to climb vp to the Top of the Steeple, and tooke it downe: with

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with the which, and a great Summe of Money which he had got together by begging in his Life-time, he builded a Gate on the North-side of the City, which to this Day is called Cripple-gate.

From thence they went to the Tower of London, which was builded by *Julius Cesar*, who was Emperour of Rome. And there they beheld Salt and Wine, which had lyen there euer since the Romanes inuaded this Land, which was many Yeeres before our Sauiour Christ was borne ; the Wine was growne so thicke, that it might haue beene cut like a Jelly. And in that Place also they saw the Money that was made of Leather, which in ancient Time went current amongst the People.

When they had to their great Contentation beheld all this, they repaired to their Lodgings, hauing also a sumptuous Supper ordained for them, with all Delight that might be. And you shall vnderstand, that when the Country Weauers, which came vp with their Dames, saw the Weauers of Candlewike-street, they had great Desire presently to haue some Conference with them ; & thus one began to challenge the other for Workmanship : quoth *Weafell*, Ile worke with any of you all for a Crowne, take if you dare, and he that makes his Yard of Cloth soonest, shall haue it. You shall be wrought withall, said the other, and if it were for ten Crownes : but we will make this Bargaine,

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gaine, that each of vs shall winde their owne Quilles. Content, quoth *Weafell*: and so to worke they went, but *Weafell* lost. Whereupon another of them tooke the Matter in Hand, who lost likewise: so that the London Weauers triumphed against the Country, casting forth diuers Frumps.

Alas, poore Fellowes, quoth they, your Hearts are good, but your Hands are ill. Tush, the Fault was in their Legs, quoth another: Pray you, Friend, were you not borne at Home? Why doe you aske? quoth *Weafell*. Because, said hee, the biggest Place of your Legge is next to your Shooe.

Cuthbert hearing this, being cholerike of Nature, chafed like a Man of Law at the Barre, & he wagers with them foure Crownes to twaine: the Others agreed, to worke they goe: but *Crab* conquered them all. Whereupon the London Weauers were nipt in the Head like Birds, and had not a Word to say.

Now, faith *Crab*, as we haue lost Nothing, so you haue wonne Nothing, & because I know you cannot be right Weauers, except you be Good-fellowes, therefore if you will goe with us, we will bestow the Ale vpon you. That is spoken like a Good-fellow and like a Weauer, quoth the other. So along they went as it were to the Signe of the Red Crosse.

When they were set downe, & had drunke well, they began merrily to prattle, and to extoll *Crab* et the

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the Skies. Whereupon *Crab* protested, that hee would come and dwell among them. Nay, that must not be, said a London Weauer : the King hath giuen us Priuiledge, that none should live among vs, but such as serue seuen Yeeres in London. With that *Crab*, according to his old Maner of prophesying, said thus :

THE Day is very neere at Hand,
When as the King of this faire Land,
Shal priuiledge you more then so :
Then Weauers shall in Skarlet goe,

And to one Brotherhood be brought,
The First is in London wrought,
When other Tradesmen by your Fame,
Shall couet all to doe the same.

Then shall you all live wondrous well,
But this one Thing I shall you tell :
The Day will come before the Doome,
In Candleweeke-street shall stand no Loome,

Nor any Weauer dwelling there,
But Men that shall more Credit beare :
For Clothing shall be fore decayde,
And Men vndone that vse that Trade.

And

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And yet the Day some Men shall see,
This Trade againe shall raised be.
When as Bayliffe of Sarum Towne,
Sall buy and purchase Bishops Downe.

When there neuer Man did sow,
Great Store of goodly Corne shall grow ;
And Woad, that makes all Colours found,
Shall spring vpon that barren Ground.

At that fame Day, I tell you plaine,
Who so aliuie doth then remaine,
A proper Maiden they shall see,
Within the Towne of Salisburie,

Of Fauour sweet, and Nature kind,
With goodly Eyes, and yet starke Blind,
This poore blind Maiden, I doe say,
In Age shall goe in rich Array.

And he that takes her to his Wife,
Shall lead a ioyfull happy Life,
The wealthiest Clothier shall he be
That euer was in that Country.

But Cloathing kept as it hath beene,
In London neuer shall be seene :

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For Weauers then the most shall win,
That worke for Clothing next the Skin.

Till Pride the Common-wealth doth peeble,
And caufeth Huswiues leaue their Wheele.
Then Pouerty vpon each Side,
Vnto thofe Workemen shall betide.

At that Time, from Eagles Nest,
That proudly builded in the West,
A Sort shall come with cunning Hand,
To bring ſtrange Weauing in this Land,

And by their Gaines that great will fall,
They ſhall maintaine the Weauers Hall :
But long they ſhall not flouriſh ſo,
But Folly with them ouerthrow.

And Men ſhall count it mickle Shame,
To beare that Kind of Weauers Name :
And this as ſure ſhall come to paſſe,
As here is Ale within this Glaffe.

When the ſilly Soules that fate about him heard
him ſpeake in this Sort, they admired and honoured
Crabbe for the fame. Why, my Maſters, ſaid *Weafell*,
doe you wonder at theſe Words ? he will tell you

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Twenty of these Tales, for which Cause we call him our Canuas Prophet. His Attire fits his Title, said they, and we neuer heard the like in our Liues : and if this should be true, it would be strange. Doubt not but it will be true, qd. *Weasell* ; for Ile tell you what, he did but once see our *Nicke kiffe Nel*, and presently he powred out this Rime :

That Kiffe, O *Nel*, God giue thee Ioy,
Will nine Months hence breed thee a Boy.

And Ile tell you what, you shall heare : we kept Reckoning, and it fell out as iuft as *Jones* buttocks on a Cloſeſtoole ; for which Cause our Maids durſt neuer kiffe a Man in his Sight : vpon this they broke Company, & went euery One about his Busines, the London Weauers to their Frames, and the Country Fellowes to their Dames, who, after their great Banqueting and Merriment, went euery one Home to their own Houses, though with leſſe Money then they brought out, yet with more Pride.

Eſpecially *Simons* Wife of South-hampton, who told the Rest of her Goffips, that ſhe ſaw no Reaſon, but that their Husbands ſhould maintain them as well as the Merchants did their Wiues : for I tell you what, quoth ſhe, we are as proper Women (in my Conceit,) as the proudest of them all, as handsome of Body, as faire of Face, our Legs as well made, and our Feete as fine : then what Reaſon is there (ſeeing our Husbands

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bands are of as good Wealth) but we should be as well maintained?

You say true, Gossip, said *Suttons* Wife: trust me, it made me blush, to see them braue it out so gallantly, and wee to goe so homely: but before God, said the other, I will haue my Husband to buy me a London Gowne, or in Faith he shall haue little Quiet: so shall mine, said another: and mine too, qd. the Third: and all of them sing the same Note: so that when they came Home, their Husbands had no little to doe: especially *Simon*, whose Wife daily lay at him for London Apparell, to whome he said, Good Woman, be content, let vs goe according to our Place and Ability: what will the Bailiffes thinke, if I should prancke thee vp like a Peacocke, and thou in thy Attire surpasse their Wiues? they would either thinke I were mad, or else that I had more Money then I could well use: consider, I pray thee, good Wife, that such as are in their Youth Masters, doe proue in their Age starke Beggers.

Beside that, it is enough to raise me vp in the Kings Booke, for many Times Mens Coffers are iudged by their Garments: why, we are Country Folks, and must keepe our selues in good Compasse: gray Russet, and good Hempe-spun Cloth doth best become vs; I tell thee, Wife, it were as vndecent for vs to goe like Londoners as it is for Londoners to goe like Courtiers.

What

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What a Coyle keepe you? quoth she, are not we Gods Creatures as well as Londoners? and the Kings Subiects, as well as they? then, finding our Wealth to be as good as theirs, why should we not goe as gay as Londoners? No, Husband, no, here is the Fault, wee are kept without it, onely because our Husbands be not so kind as Londoners: why, Man, a Cobler there keeps his Wife better then the best Clothier in this Countrey: nay, I will affirm it, that the London Oyster-wives, and the very Kitchen-stuffe Cryers, doe exceed vs in their Sundaies Attire: nay, more then that, I did see the Water-bearers Wife, which belongs to One of our Merchants, come in with a Tankerd of Water on her Shoulder, and yet Half a Dozen Gold Rings on her Fingers. You may then thinke, Wife, (quoth he) she got them not with Idlenesse.

But, Wife, you must consider what London is, the chiefe and capitall City of all the Land, a Place on the which all Strangers cast their Eyes, it is (Wife) the Kings Chamber and his Maiesties royall Seate: to that City repaires all Nations vnder Heauen. Therefore it is most meete and conuenient, that the Citizens of such a City should not goe in their Apparell like Peasants, but for the Credit of our Country, weare such seemely Habits as doe carry Grauity and Come-lineesse in the Eyes of all Beholders. But if wee of the Country went so (quoth she) were it not as great Credit

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dit for the Land as the other? Woman, qd. her Husband, it is altogether needleffe, and in diuers Respects it may not be. Why then, I pray you, quoth she, let us goe dwell at London. A Word foone spoken, said her Husband, but not so easie to be performed: therefore, Wife, I pray thee hold thy Prating, for thy Talke is foolish: yea, yea, Husband, your old churlish Conditions will neuer be left, you keepe me here like a Drudge and a Droile, and so you may keepe your Money in your Purse, you care not for your Credit, but before I will goe so like a Shepheardeffe, I will first goe naked: and I tell you plaine, I scorne it greatly, that you should clap a gray Gowne on my Backe, as if I had not brought you Two-pence: before I was married, you swore I should haue any Thing that I requested, but now all is forgotten. And in saying this, she went in, and soone after she was so sicke, that needes she must goe to Bed: and when she was laid, she draue out that Night with many grieuous Groanes, Sighing and Sobbing, and no Rest she could take God wot. And in the Morning when she should rise, the good Soule fell downe in a Swowne, which put her Maidens in a great Fright, who running downe to their Master, cryed out, Alas, alas, our Dame is dead! our Dame is dead! The Good-man hearing this, ran vp in all Haste, and there fell to rubbing and chafing

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chafing of her Temples, fending for *aqua vitæ*, and faying, Ah, my Sweet-heart, speake to me, Good-wife, alacke, alacke ! call in the Neighbours, you Queanes, quoth he. With that fhe lift vp her Head, fetching a great Groane, and presently fwouned againe, and much a doe ywis, he had to keepe Life in her : but when fhe was come to her felfe, How doft thou, Wife ? qd. he. What wilt thou haue ? for Gods fake tell me if thou haft a Mind to any Thing, thou shalt haue it. Away, Diffembler ! (qd. fhe) how can I beleeue thee ? thou haft faid to me as much a hundred Times, and deceiued me ; it is thy Churlifhnesse that hath killed my Heart, neuer was Woman matcht to fo unkind a Man.

Nay, Good-wife, blame me not without Cause : God knoweth how heartily I loue thee. Loue me ? no, no, thou didft neuer carry my Loue but on the Tip of thy Tongue, quoth fhe ; I dare fwear thou defireft Nothing fo much as my Death, and for my Part, I would to God thou hadft thy Desire : but be content, I shall not trouble thee long : and with that fetching a Sigh, fhee fwouned and gaue a great Groane. The Man seeing her in this Cafe, was woundrous woe : but fo foone as they had recouered her, he faid, O my deare Wife, if any bad Conceit hath ingendered this Sickenesse, let me know it ; or if thou knowft any Thing that may procure thy Health, let

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let me vnderstand thereof, and I protest thou shalt haue it, if it cost me all that ever I haue.

O Husband, quoth she, how may I credit your Words, when for a paltry Sute of Apparell you denied me? Well, Wife, quoth he, thou shalt haue Apparell or any Thing else thou wilt request, if God send thee once Health. O Husband, if I may find you so kind, I shall think my selfe the happiest Woman in the World, thy Words haue greatly comforted my Heart, mee thinketh if I had it, I could drink a good Draught of Renish Wine. Well, Wine was sent for: O Lord, said she, that I had a Piece of a Chicken, I feele my Stomacke desirous of some Meate. Glad am I of that, said her Husband; and so the Woman within a few Dayes after that was very well.

But you shall vnderstand, that her Husband was faine to dresse her London-like, ere he could get her quiet, neither would it please her except the Stuffe was bought in Cheapside: for out of Cheapside nothing would content her, were it neuer so good: infomuch, that if she thought a Taylor of Cheapside made not her Gowne, she would sweare it were quite spoiled.

And hauing thus wonne her Husband to her Will, when the Rest of the Clothiers Wiues heard thereof, they would be futed in the like Sort too: so that euer since, the Wiues of South-hampton, Salisbury, of Gloucester,

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•ester, Worcester, and Reading, went all as gallant
and as braue as any Londoners Wiues.

*How the Clothiers sent the King Aide into France, and
how he ouercame his Brother Robert, and brought
him into England, and how the Clothiers feasted his
Maiesy and his Sonne at Reading.* CHAP. 7.

THE Kings Maiestie being at the Warres in France,
against *Lewis* the French King, and Duke *Robert*
of Normandy, fending for diuers Supplies of Souldiers
out of England, the Clothiers at their owne proper
Cost set out a great Number, and sent them ouer to
the King.

Which *Roger* Bishop of *Salisbury*, who gouerned
the Realme in the Kings Absence, did certifie the
King thereof, with his Letters written in their Com-
mendations.

And afterward it came to passe, that God sent his
Highness Victory ouer his Enemies, and hauing taken
his Brother Prisoner, brought him most ioyfully with
him into England, and appointed him to be kept in
Cardife Castle Prisoner, yet with this Fauour, that he
might hunt and hawke where he would vp and downe
the Country, and in this Sort he liued a good while,
of whom we will speake more at large hereafter.

The King being thus come Home, after his Winters
Rest,

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Reft, he made his Summers Progresse into the West-country, to take a View of all the chief Townes: whereof the Clothiers being aduertised, they made great Preparation against his comming, because he had promised to visit them all.

And when his Grace came to Reading, he was entertained and receiued with great Ioy and Triumph: *Thomas Cole* being the chief Man of Regard in all the Towne, the King honoured his House with his princely Presence, where during the Kings Abode, he and his Sonne and Nobles were highly feasted.

There the King beheld the great Number of People, that was by that one Man maintained in Worke, whose hearty Affection and Loue towards his Maieftie did well appeare, as well by their outward Countenances, as their Gifts presented vnto him. But of *Cole* himselfe the King was so well perswaded, that he committed such trust in him, and put him in great Authority in the Towne. Furthermore the King said, That for the Loue which thos People bore him liuing, that hee would lay his Bones among them when he was dead. For I know not, said he, where they may be better bestowed, till the blessed Day of Resurrection, than among these my Friends, which are like to be happy Partakers of the same.

Wherupon his Maiesty caused there to be builded a most goodly and famous Abbey: in which he might shew

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shew his Deuotion to God, by increasing his Seruice, and leaue Example to other his Successors to doe the like. Likewise within the Towne he after builded a faire and goodly Castle, in the which he often kept his Court, which was a Place of his chiefe Residence during his Life, saying to the Clothiers, that seeing he found them such faithfull Subiects, he would be their Neighbour, and dwell among them.

After his Maiesties royall Feasting at Reading, he proceeded in Progresse, till he had visitid the whole West-countries, being wondrously delighted to see those People so diligent to apply their Businesse: and comming to Salisbury, the Bishop receiued his Maief-ty with great Ioy, and with Triumph attended on his Grace to his Palace, where his Highnesse lodged.

There *Sutton* the Clothier presented his Highnesse with a Broad Cloth, of so fine a Threed, and exceeding good Workmanship, and therewithall of so faire a Colour, as his Grace gaue Commendation thereof, and, as it is said, he held it in such high Estimation, that thereof he made his Parliament Robes, & the first Parliament that was euer in England was graced with the Kings Person in those Robes, in Requitall whereof his Highnes afterward yeeded *Sutton* many princely Fauours.

And it is to be remembered, that *Simon* of South-hampton (seeing the King had ouerpast the Place where

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where he dwelt) came with his Wife and Seruants to Salisbury, and against the K. going forth of that City, hee caused a most pleasant Arbour to be made vpon the Toppe of the Hill leading to Salisburie, beset all with red and white Roses, in such Sort, that not any Part of the Timber could be feene, within the which sat a Maiden attired like a Queen, attended on by a faire Traine of Maidens, who at the Kings Approach prefentned him with a Garland of sweet Flowres, yeelding him such Honour as the Ladies of Rome were wont to doe to their Princes after their Victories: which the King tooke in gracious Part, and for his Farewell from that Country, they bore him Company ouer Part of the Plaine, with the Sound of diuers sweet Instruments of Musicke. All which, when his Grace vnderstood was done at the Cost of a Clothier, he said he was the most honoured by those Men, aboue all the meane Subiects in his Land: & so his Highnes past on to Exceter, hauing giuen great Rewards to these Maidens.

Thomas Doue and the Residue of the Clothiers, against his Graces comming thither, had ordained diuers sumptuous Shewes; first, there was One that presented the Person of *Augustus Cesar* the Emperour, who commanded after the Romane Inuasion, that their City should be called *Augustus*, after his owne Name, which

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which before Time was called *Iſca*, and of later Yeeres Exeter.

There his Maiefty was royally feasted feuen Dayes together, at the onely Cost of Clothiers, but the diuers Delightes and sundry Pastimes which they made there before the King, and his Nobles, is too long here to be rehearsed, and therefore I will ouerpaffe them to auoid Tediousneſſe.

His Grace then coasting along the Country, at laſt came to Glouceſter, an ancient City, which was builded by *Gloue*, a British King, who named it after his owne Name, Glouceſter. Here was his Maiefty enter-tained by *Gray* the Clothier, who profest himſelfe to be of that ancient Family of Grayes, whose firſt Originall iſſued out of that ancient and honorable Castle and Towne of Rithin.

Here was the King moſt bountifully feasted, hauing in his Company his Brother *Robert* (although his Priſoner the ſame Time.) And his Grace being deſirous to ſee the Maidens card and ſpinne, they were of Pur-poſe ſet to their Worke: among whom was faire *Margaret* with her white Hand, whose excellent Beauty hauing pierct the Eyes of the amorous Duke, it made ſuſh an Impreſſion in his Heart, that afterward he could neuer forget her: and ſo vehemently was his Affection kindled, that he could take no Reſt, till by writing

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writing he had bewrayed his Minde : but of this we will speake more in another Place : and the King at his Departure faid, that to gratifie them, hee would make his Sonne *Robert* their Earle, which was the first Earle that euer was in Gloucester.

Now when his Grace was come from thence, he went to Worcester, where *William Fitz-allen* made Preparation in all honourable Sort to receiue him, which Man being borne of great Parentage, was not to learne how to entertaine his Maiestie, being descended of that famous Family, whose Patrimony lay about the Towne of Oswestrie, which Towne his Predeceffors had inclosed with stately Walls of Stone.

Although aduerse Fortune had so grieuously frowned on some of them, that their Children were fain to become Tradesmen, whose Hands were to them in stead of Lands, notwithstanding God raised againe the Fame of this Man, both by his great Wealth, and also in his Posterity, whose eldest Son *Henry*, the Kings God-son, became afterward the Maior of London, who was the first Maior that euer was in that City, who gouerned the same 23 Yeeres : and then his Son *Roger Fitz-allen* was the second Maior.

The princely Pleasures that in Worcester were shewn the King, were many and maruelous, and in no Place had his Maiesty receiued more Delight then here : for the which at his Departure he did shew himselfe

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himselfe very thankefull. Now when his Grace had thus taken View of all his good Townes west-ward, and in that Progrefse had visted these Clothiers, he returned to London, with great Ioy of his Commons.

How Hodgekins of Hallifax came to the Court, and complained to the King, that his Priuiledge was nothing worth, because when they found any Offender, they could not get a Hangman to execute him: and how by a Fryer a Gin was devised to chop off Mens Heads of it selfe. CHAP. 8.

ATFER that *Hodgekins* had got the Priuiledge for the Towne of Halifax, to hang vp such Theeues as stole their Cloth in the Night, presently without any further Iudgement, all the Clothiers of the Towne were exceeding glad, and perfwaded themselues, that now their Goods would be safe all Night, without watching them at all, so that whereas before, the Towne maintained certaine Watchmen to keepe their Cloth by Night, they were hereupon dismissed as a Thing needleffe to be done, supposing with themselves, that seeing they should be straight hanged that were found faulty in this Point, that no Man would be so desperate to enterprize any such Act. And indeed the Matter being noyfed through the whole Country, that they were straight to be hanged that vfe

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vse such Theeuery, it made many lewd Liuers to restraine such Theeuery.

Neuertheles, there was at that same Time liuing, a notable Theefe named *Wallis*, whom in the North they called *Mighty Wallis*, in regard of his Valour and Manhood : This Man being most subtile in such Kind of Knauery, hauing heard of this late Priuiledge, and therewithall of the Townes Security, said that once he would venture his Necke for a Packe of Northerne Cloth : and therefore comming to One or Two of his Companions, he asked if they would be Partners in his Aduenture, and if (quoth he) you will herein hazard your Bodies, you shall be Sharers in all our Booties.

At length by many Perswasions the Men consented : whereupon late in the Night, they got them all into a Farriours Shop, and called vp the Folkes of the House. What the foule ill wald you haue (quoth they) at this Time of the Night ? *Wallis* answered, saying, Good-fellowes, we would haue you to remoue the Shooes of our Horses Feete, and set them on againe, and for your Paines you shall be well pleased. The Smith at length was perswaded, and when he had pluckt off all the Shooes from their Horses Feete, they would needs haue them all set on againe, quite contrary with the Cakins forward, that should stand backward. How ? fay, fay, Man, qd. the Smith, are ye like Fules ? what the Deele doe you meane to breake
your

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your Crags? gud Faith, I tro the Men be wood. Not so, Smith, qd. they, do thou as we bid thee, & thou shalt haue thy Money: for it is an old Prouerbe,

Be it better, or be it worse,

Please you the Man that beares the Purse.

Gud Faith and see I fall, qd. the Smith, and so did as hee was willed. When *Wallis* had thus caused their Horses to be shod, to Hallifax they went, where they without any Let, laded their Horses with Cloth, and so departed contrary Way.

In the Morning, so foone as the Clothiers came to the Field, they found that they were robt, whereupon one ranne to another to tell these Things. Now when *Hodgekins* heard thereof, rising up in Haste, he wild his Neighbors to marke and see, if they could not defcry either the Foot-steppes of Men or Horses. Which being done, they perceiued that Horses had beene there, and seeking to pursue them by their Foot-steppes, they went a cleane contrary Way, by Reason that the Horses were shodde backward: and when in vaine they had long pursued them, they returned, being neuer the neere. Now *Wallis* vsed his Feate so long, that at length he was taken, and Two more with him: whereupon, according to the Priuiledge of the Towne, they put Halters about the Theeues Neckes prestantly to hang them vp.

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When they were come to the Place appointed, *Wallis* and the Rest being out of Hope to escape Death, prepared themselves patiently to suffer the Rigor of the Law. And there with the Rest laying open the Lewdnesse of his Life, grieuously lamenting for his Sinnes, at length commanding their Soules to God, they yeelded their Bodies to the Graue, with which Sight the People were greatly moued with Pity, because they had neuer seene Men come to hanging before: but when they should haue beene tyed vp, *Hodgekins* willed one of his Neighbours to play the Hang-mans Part, who would not by any Meanes doe it, although he was a very poore Man, who for his Paines should haue beene possest of all their Apparell. When he would not yeeld to the Office, one of those which had his Cloth stolen, was commanded to doe the Deed; but he in like Maner would not, saying, When I haue the Skill to make a Man, I will hang a Man, if it chance my Workmanship doe not like me.

And thus from one to another, the Office of the Hang-man was posted off. At last a Rogue came by, whom they would haue compelled to haue done that Deed. Nay, my Masters, qd. he, not so: but as you haue got a Priuiledge for the Towne, so you were best to procure a Commission to make a Hang-man, or else you are like to be without for me. Neighbor *Hodgekins*,

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kins, quoth one, I pray you doe this Office your selfe, you haue had most Losse, and therefore you should be the most ready to hang them your selfe. No, not I, (quoth *Hodgekins*,) though my Losse were ten Times greater than it is ; notwithstanding look which of these Theeues will take upon him to hang the other, shall haue his Life sauied, otherwise they shall all to Prifon till I can prouide a Hangman.

When *Wallis* saw the Matter brought to this passe, he began stoutly to reply, saying, My Masters of the Towne of Halifax, though your Priuiledge stretch to hang Men vp prently that are found stealing of your Goods, yet it giues you no Warrant to imprison them till you prouide them a Hang-man : my selfe, with these my Fellowes, haue here yeelded our felues to satisfie the Law, and if it be not performed, the Fault is yours, and not ours, and therefore we humbly take our Leaue : from the Gallowes the xviii. of August. And with that he leapt from the Ladder, and hurl'd the Halter at *Hodgekins* Face.

When the Clothiers saw this, they knew not what to fay, but taking them by the Sleeues, entreated to haue their owne againe. Not so, qd. *Wallis*, you get not the Value of a Placke or a Bawby : we haue stolne your Cloth, then why do you not hang vs ? here we haue made our felues ready, and if you will not hang vs, chuse. A Plague upon you, quoth he, you haue hindred

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hindred me God knowes what: I made Account to dine this Day in Heauen, and you keepe me here on Earth, where there is not a Quarter of that good Cheare. The foule Euill take you all; I was fully prouided to giue the Gallowes a Boxe on the Eare, and now God knowes when I shall be in so good a Minde againe: and so he, with the Rest of his Companions, departed.

When *Hodgekins* saw, that notwithstanding their Theeuery, how they flowted at their Lenity, he was much mooued in Minde: and as he stood in his Dumps chewing his Cud, making his Dinner with a Dish of Melancholy, a Gray Fryer reuerently saluted him in this Sort: All haile, good-man *Hodgekins*, Happinesse and Health be euer with you, and to all Suppressors of lewd Liuers, God send euerlasting Loyes.

I am sorry, Good-man *Hodgekins*, that the great Priuiledge which our King gaue to this Towne comes to no greater Purpose: better farre had it beene that it had neuer beene granted, then so lightly regarded: the Towne hath suffered through their owne Peeuishnesse, an euerlasting Reproch this Day, onely because foolish Pitty hath hindred Justice.

Consider, that Compassion is not to be had vpon Theeues and Robbers: Pity onely appertaineth to the vertuous Sort, who are ouerwhelmed with the Waues
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of Mifery and Mischance. What great Cause of Boldnesse haue you giuen to bad Liuers, by letting these Fellowes thus to escape, and how shall you now keepe your Goods in Safety, seeing you fulfill not the Law, which should be your Defence? neuer thinke that Theeues will make any Conscience to carry away your Goods, when they find them selues in no Danger of Death, who haue more Cause to praise your Pity, then commend your Wisedome: wherefore in Time seeke to preuent the ensuing Euill.

For my owne Part, I haue that Care of your Good, that I would worke all good Meanes for your Benefit, and yet not so much in respect of your Profit, as for the Desire I haue to vphold Justice, and seeing I finde you and the Rest so womanish, that you could not find in your Hearts to hang a Theefe, I have deuised how to make a Gin, that shall cut off their Heads without Mans Helpe, and if the King will allow thereof.

When *Hodgekins* heard this, he was somewhat comforted in Mind, and said to the Fryer, that if by his cunning he would performe it, he would once againe make Sute to the King to haue his Grant for the same. The Fryer willed him to haue no Doubt in him: and so when he had deuised it, he got a Carpenter to frame it out of Hand.

Hodgekins in the meane Time posted vp to the Court, and told his Maiesy that the Priuiledge of Hallifax

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Hallifax was not worth a Pudding. Why so ? said the King. Because, quoth *Hodgekins*, we can get neuer a Hangman to trusse our Theeues : but if it shall like your good Grace, (quoth he) there is a feate Fryer, that will make vs a Deuice, which shall without the Hand of Man cut off the Cragges of all such Carles, if your Maiesy will please to allow thereof.

The King vnderstanding the full Effect of the Matter, at length granted his Petition : whereupon till this Day it is obserued in Hallifax, that such as are taken stealing of their Cloth, haue their Heads chopt off with the fame Gin.

How the Bailiffes of London could get no Man to bee a Catchpole, and how certaine Flemings took that Office upon them, whereof many of them were fledde into this Realme, by Reason of certaine Waters that had drowned a great Part of their Country. CHAP. 9.

THE City of London being at that Time gouerned by Bailiffes, it came to passe, that in a certaine Fray two of their Catch-poles were killed, for at that Time they had not the Name of Sergeants : and you shall understand, that their Office was then so much hated and detested of Englishmen, that none of them would take it vpon him : so that the Bailiffes were glad to get any Man whatsoeuer, and to giue him certain Wages to performe that Office.

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It came to passe, as I said before, that Two of their Officers by arresting of a Man, were at one Instant slaine, by Meanes whereof the Bailiffes were enforced to seek Others to put in their Roomes, but by no Meanes could they get any, wherefore according to their wonted Manner, they made Proclamation, that if there were any Man that would present himselfe before them, he should not onely be settled in that Office during their Liues, but also should haue such Maintenance and Allowance, as for such Men was by the City prouided: & notwithstanding that it was an Office most necessary in the Commonwealth, yet did the poorest Wretch despise it, that liued in any Estimation among his Neighbours.

At laft, a Couple of Flemings, which were fled into this Land, by Reason that their Country was drowned with the Sea, heering the Proclamation, offered themfelues vnto the Bayliffes, to serue in this Place, who were preſently receiued and accepted, & according to order had Garments giuen them, which were of 2 Colors, blue & red their Coates, Breeches, & Stockings, whereby they were known and diſcerned from other Men.

Within Halfe a Yeere after it came to passe, that *Thomas Doue* of Exeter came vp to London, who hauing by his Iollity and Goodfellowship brought himselfe greatly behind Hand, was in Danger to diuers
Men

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Men of the Cite, among the Rest, one of his Creditors feed an Officer to arrest him. The Dutchman, that had not beene long experienced in such Matters, and hearing how many of his Fellows had beene killed for attempting to arrest Men, stood quiuering and quaking in a Corner of the Street to watch for *Thomas Doue*, and hauing long waited, at length he espied him: whereupon he prepared his Mace ready, and with a pale Countenance proceeded to his Office; at what Time comming behind the Man, suddenly with his Mace he knockt him on the Pate, faying, I arrest you, giuing him such a Blow, that he fell him to the Ground.

The Catchpole thinking he had killed the Man, he left his Mace behind him and ranne away: the Creditor he ran after him, calling and crying that he should turne againe: But the Fleming would not by any Meanes turne backe, but got him quite out of the City, and tooke Sanctuary at Westminster.

Doue being come to himselfe, arose and went to his Inne, no Man hindring his Passage, being not a little glad he so escaped the Danger. Yet, neuerthelesse, at his next comming to London, another Catchpole met with him, and arrested him in the King's Name.

Doue being dismayed at this mischievous Mischance, knew not what to doe: at last hee requested the Catchpole that hee would not violently cast him in Prifon,

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but stay till such Time as he could send for a Friend to be his Surety ; and although Kindnesse in a Catchpole be rare, yet was he won with faire Words to doe him this Fauour : whereupon *Doue* desired one to goe to his Oast *Iarrat*, who immediately came with him, & offered himselfe to be *Doues* Surety.

The Officer, who neuer saw this Man before, was much amazed at his Sight : for *Iarrat* was a great and mighty Man of Body, of Countenance grim, and exceeding high of Stature, so that the Catchpole was wonderfully afraid, asking if he could find neuer a Surety but the Deuill, most fearefully intreating him to coniure him away, and he would doe *Doue* any Fauour. What, will you not take my Word ? qd. *Iarrat*. Sir, qd. the Catchpole, if it were for any Matter in Hell, I would take your Word as foone as any Diuels in that Place, but seeing it is for a Matter on Earth, I would gladly haue a Surety.

Why, thou whorson Cricket ! (quoth *Iarrat*,) thou Maggat-apie ! thou Spinner ! thouaultry Spider ! dost thou take me for a Deuill ? Sirra, take my Word, I charge thee, for this Man, or else, goodman Butter-fly, Ile make thee repent it. The Officer, while he was in the House, said he was cōtent, but as soon as he came into the Street he cryed, saying, Helpe, helpe, good Neighbors, or else the Deuill will carry away my Prisoner : notwithstanding, there was not one Man would

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would stirre to be the Catchpoles Aide. Which when he saw, he tooke fast hold on *Thomas Doue*, and would not by any Meanes let him goe.

Iarrat seeing this, made no more adoe, but coming to the Officer, gaue him such a Fillop on the Forehead with his Finger, that he fell the poore Fleming to the Ground: and while he lay in the Street stretching his Heeles, *Iarrat* tooke *Doue* vnder his Arme and carried him Home, where he thought himselfe as safe as King *Charlemaine* in Mount-Albon.

The next Morning *Iarrat* conueyed *Doue* out of Towne, who afterward kept him in the Country, and came no more in the Catchpoles Clawes.

How Duke Robert came a wooing to Margaret with the white Hand, and how he appointed to come and steale her away from her Masters. CHAP. 10.

THE beautifull *Margaret*, who had now dwelt with her Dame the Space of foure Yeeres, was highly regarded and secretly beloued of many gallant and worthy Gentlemen of the Country, but of Two most especially, Duke *Robert*, and Sir *William Ferris*. It chanced on a Time that faire *Margaret*, with many Others of her Masters Folkes, went a Hay-making, attired in a red Stammell Peticoate, and a broad Strawne Hat vpon her Head; she had also a Hay-forke, and in her Lappe she did carry her Breake-fast. As she went

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went along, Duke *Robert*, with One or Two of his Keepers, met with her, whose amiable Sight did now anew re-inkindle the secret Fire of Loue, which long lay smothering in his Heart. Wherefore meeting her so happily, he saluted her thus friendly.

Faire Maid, good Morow; are you walking so diligently to your Labour? Needes must the Weather be faire, when the Sun shines so cleare, and the Hay wholesome that is dried with such splendid Rayes. Renowned and most notable Duke, (qd. she) poore Haruest Folkes pray for faire Weather, and it is the Laborers Comfort to see his Worke prosper, and the more happy may we count the Day that is blessed with your princely Presence. But more happy, said the Duke, are they which are conuerfant in thy Company. But let me intreat thee to turne backe to thy Masters with me, and commit thy Forke to some that are fitter for such Toyle: trust me, me thinkes thy Dame is too much ill-aduised in setting thee to such homely Busines. I muse thou canst indure this vile beseeming Seruitude, whose delicate Limbs were neuer framed to proue such painefull Experiments.

Albeit, quoth she, it becommeth not me to controule your iudicial Thoughts, yet, were you not the Duke, I would say, your Opinion deceipted you: though your faire Eyes seeme cleare, yet I deemed them vnperfect, if they cast before your Mind any Shadow or Sparke
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of Beauty in me : But I rather thinke, because it hath beene an old Saying, that Women are proud to heare themselues praised, that you either speake this to driue away the Time, or to wring me from my too apparant Imperfections. But I humbly intreate Pardon ; too long haue I fore-flowed my Businesse, and shewne my selfe ouer-bold in your Prefence ; and therewith, with a courtly Grace, bending her Knees to the courteous Duke, shee went forward to the Field, and the Duke to the Towne of Gloucester.

When he came thither, he made his Keepers great Cheare, intreating them they would giue him Respit to be awhile with old *Gray* ; for we Twaine must haue a Game or Two, quoth he : and for my safe Return, I gage to you my princely Word, that as I am a true Knight and a Gentleman, I will returne safe to your Charge againe.

The Keepers being content, the Duke departed, and with old *Gray* goes to the Field, to peruse the Worke-folkes, where while *Gray* found himselfe busie in many Matters, he tooke Opportunity to talke with *Margaret* ; shee who by his Letters before was priuie to his Purpose, guest beforehand the Cause of his comming : to whom he spake to this effect :

Faire Maid, I did long since manifest my Loue to thee by my Letter ; tell me, therefore, were it not better to be a Dutches then Drudge ? a Lady of high Reputation,

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Reputatione, then a Seruant of simple Degree? With me thou mightest liue in Pleasure, where here thou drawest thy Dayes forth in Paine; by my Loue thou shouldest be made a Lady of great Treasures: where now thou art poore and beggerly: all Manner of Delights shouldest then attend on thee, and whatsoeuer thy Heart desireth, thou shouldest haue: wherefore seeing it lyes in thy owne Choice, make thy selfe happy, by consenting to my Suite.

Sir, (quoth she) I confesse your Loue deserues a Ladies Fauour, your Affection a faithfull Friend, such a One as could make but one Heart and Mind of two Hearts & Bodyes; but farre unfit it is that the Turtle shouldest match with the Eagle, though her Loue be neuer so pure, her Wings are unfit to mount so high. While *Thales* gazed on the Starres, he stumbled in a Pit. And they that clime unaduisedly, catch a Fall suddenly: what auailleth high Dignity in Time of Adversty? it neither helpeth the Sorrow of the Heart, nor remoues the Bodies Misery: as for Wealth and Treasure, what are they, but Fortunes Baits to bring Men in Danger? good for nothing but to make People forget themselues: & whereas you alleadge Poverty to be a Hinderer of the Hearts Comfort, I find it my selfe contrary, knowing more Surety to rest vnder a simple Habit, then a royll Robe: and verily there is none in the World poore, but they that think themselues poore: for such as are indued with

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Content are rich, hauing nothing else ; but he that is possessed with Riches without Content, is most wretched and miserable. Wherefore, most noble Duke, albeit I account my Life vnworthy of your least Fauour, yet I would desire you to match your Loue to your Like, and let me rest to my Rake, and vse my Forke for my Liuing.

Consider, faire *Margaret*, (quoth he) that it lyes not in Mans Power to place his Loue where he list, being the Worke of an high Deity. A Bird was neuer feene in Pontus, nor true Loue in a fleeting Mind : neuer shall remoue the Affection of my Heart, which in Nature ressembleth the Stone Abiston, whose Fire can neuer be cooled : wherefore, sweet Maiden, giue not obstinate Denial, where gentle Acceptance ought to be receiued.

Faire Sir, (quoth she) consider what high Displeasure may rife by a rash Match, what Danger a Kings Frownes may breed ; my worthlesse Matching with your Royalty may perhaps regaine your Liberty, and hazard my Life : then call to Mind how little you should enioy your Loue, or I my wedded Lord.

The Duke at these Words made this Reply, that if she consented, she should not dread any Danger. The Thunder (quoth he) is driuen away by ringing of Belles, the Lions Wrath qualified by a yeelding Body : how much more a Brothers Anger with a Brothers
Intreaty ?

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Intreaty? By me he hath receiued many Fauors, and neuer yet did he requite any One of them: and who is ignorant that the princely Crown which adorneth his Head is my Right? all which I am content he shall still enjoy, so he requite my Kindnesse. But if he should not, then would I be like those Men, (that eatting of the Tree Lutes) forget the Country where they were borne; and neuer more should this Clime couer my Head, but with thee would I liue in a strange Land, being better content with an Egge in thy Company, then with all the Delicates in England.

The Maiden hearing this, who with many other Words was long wooed, at last consented; where yeelding to him her Heart with her Hand, he departed, appointing to certifie her from Cardiffe Castle, what Determination he would follow: so taking his Leauue of *Gray*, he went to his Brothers, and with them posted to Cardiffe.

Now it is to be remembered, that Sir *William Ferrers*, within a Day or two after, came vnto *Grayes* Houfe, as it was his ordinary Custome, but not so much ywis for *Grayes* Company, as for the Minde he had to *Margaret* his Maiden, who although he were a married Man, and had a faire Lady to his Wife, yet he laid hard Siege to the Fort of this Maidens Chastity, hauing with many faire Words sought to allure her, and by the Offer of sundry rich Gifts to tempt her.

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her. But when she saw, that by a hundred Denials she could not be rid of him, she now chanced on a Sudden to giue him such an Answer, as droue him from a Deceit into such a Conceit, as neuer after that Time he troubled her.

Sir *William Ferrers* being uery importunate to haue her grant his Desire, and when after sundry Assaults she gaue him still the Repulfe, hee would needes know the Reason why shee would not loue him ; quoth he, If thou didst but consider who he is that seeketh thy Fauour, what Pleasure he may doe thee by his Purse, and what Credit by his Countenance, thou wouldst neuer stand on such nice Points. If I be thy Friend, who darest be thy Foe ? and what is he that will once call thy Name in Question for any Thing ? therefore, sweet Girle, be better aduised, and refuse not my Offer, being so large.

Truly, Sir *William* (quoth she) though there be many Reasons to make me deny your Suite, yet is there one aboue the Rest that causes me I cannot loue you. Now I pray thee, my Wench, let me know that, quoth he, and I will amend it, whatfoeuer it be. Pardon me, Sir, said *Margaret* ; if I should speake my Mind, it would possibly offend you, and doe me no Pleasure, because it is a Defect in Nature, which no Phisicke can cure. Sir *William* hearing on her so, being abashed at her Speech, said, Faire *Margaret*,

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let me (if I may obtaine no more at thy Hands) yet intreat thee to know what this Defect should be : I am not wry-neckt, crook-legd, stub-footed, lame-handed, nor bleare-eyed : what can make this Mislike ? I neuer knew any Body that tooke Exceptions at my Person before.

And the more forry am I, quoth she, that I was so mala-pert to speake it ; but pardon me my Presumption, good Sir *William* ; I would I had beene like the Storke, tonguelefesse, then should I neuer haue caused your Disquiet. Nay, sweet *Margaret*, quoth he, tell me, deare Loue, I commend thy Singlenesse of Heart, good *Margaret*, speake. Good Sir *William*, let it rest, quoth she ; I know you will not beleue it when I haue reuealed it, neither is it a Thing that you can helpe : and yet such is my Foolishnesse, had it not beene for that, I thinke verily I had granted your Suite ere now. But seeing you vrge me so much to know what it is, I will tell you : it is, Sir, your ill-fauoured great Nose, that hangs fagging so lothsomely to your Lips, that I cannot finde in my Heart so much as to kisse you.

What, my Nose ! quoth he, is my Nose so great and I neuer knew it ? certainly I thought my Nose to be as comely as any Mans : but this it is, we are all apt to thinke well of our selues, and a great deale better than we ought : but let me see, my Nose ! by the Mass, tis true, I doe now feele it my selfe : Good Lord,

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Lord, how was I blinded before ? Hereupon it is certaine, that the Knight was driuen into such a Conceit, as none could perswade him but his Nose was so great indeed : his Lady, or any other that spake to the contrarie, he would say they were Flatterers, and that they lied, infomuch that he would be ready to strike some of them that commended and spake well of his Nose. If they were Men of Worship, or any other that contraried him in his Opinion, he would sweare they flowted him, and be ready to challenge them the Field. He became so ashamed of himselfe, that after that Day he would neuer goe Abroad, whereby *Margaret* was well rid of his Company.

On a Time, a wise and graue Gentleman seeing him grounded in his Conceit so strongly, gaue his Lady Counsell, not to contrary him therein, but rather say that she would seeke out some cunning Physician to cure him : for, said he, as Sir *William* hath taken this Conceit of himselfe, so is he like neuer to heare other Opinion, till his owne Conceit doth remoue it, the which must be wisely wrought to bring it to passe.

Whereupon the Lady, hauing conferred with a Physician that beare a great Name in the Countrey, hee vndertooke to remoue this fond Conceit by his Skill. The Day being appointed when the Phisician should come, and the Knight being told thereof, for
very

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very Ioy he would goe forth to meeete him, when a Woman of the Towne saw the Knight, hauing heard what Rumor went because of his Nose, shhee looked very stedfastly vpon him: the Knight casting his Eye vpon her, seeing her to gaze so wistly in his Face, with an angry Countenance said thus to her, Why, how now, good Huswife, cannot you get you about your Busines? The Woman being a shrewish Queane, answered him cuttedly, No, mary can I not, qd. sh. No, you Drab, what is the Cause? said the Knight. Because, quoth sh. your Nose stands in my Way: wherewith the Knight, being uery angry and abashed, went back againe to his House.

The Physician being come, he had filled a certaine Bladder with Sheeps Blood, and conueyed it into his Sleeue, where at the Issue of the Bladder he had put in a Piece of a Swans Quill, through the which the Blood should runne out of the Bladder so close by his Hand, that hee, holding the Knight by the Nose, it might not be perceiued but that it issued thence. All Things being prepared, he told the Knight, that by a foule corrupt Blood wherewith the Veines of his Nose were ouer-charged, his Impediment did grow, therefore, quoth he, to haue Redrefle for this Disease, you must haue a Veine opened in your Nose, whence this foule Corruption must be taken: whereupon it will follow,

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follow, that your Nose will fall againe to his naturall Proportion, and neuer shall you be troubled with this Griefe any more, and thereupon will I gage my Life.

I pray you, Master Doctor, said the Knight, is my Nose so big as you make it? With Reuerence I may speake it, said the Physician, to tell the Truth, and auoid Flattery, I neuer saw a more misshapen Nose so foule to Sight. Lo you now, Madam, quoth the Knight, this is you that said my Nose was as well, as handsome, and as comely a Nose as any Mans.

Alas, Sir, qd. she, I spake it (God wot) because you should not grieue at it, nor take my Words in ill Part, neither did it indeed become me to mislike of your Nose.

All this we will quickly remedy, said the Physician, haue no doubt: and with that he uery orderly prickt him in the Nose, but not in a Veine whereby he might bleed: and presently hauing a Tricke finely to vnstop the Quill, the Blood ranne into a Bason in great Abundance: and when the Bladder was empty, and the Bason almost full, the Physician seemed to close the Veine, and asked him how he felt his Nose, shewing the great Quantite of filthy Blood which from thence he had taken.

The Knight beholding it with great Wonder, said, he thought that no Man in the World had beene troubled with such Abundance of corrupt Blood in his whole

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whole Body as lay in his mis-shapen Nose, and therewithall he began to touch and handle his Nose, saying, that he felt it mightily affwaged. Immediately a Glasfe was brought, wherein he might behold himselfe. Yea, mary, qd. he, now I praise God, I see my Nose is come into some reaonable Proportion, and I feele my selfe very well eased of the Burthen thereof ; but if it continue thus, thats all. I will warrant your Worshipp, said the Physician, for euer being troubled with the like againe. Whereupon the Knight receiued great Ioy, and the Doctor a high Reward.

*How Thomas of Reading was murdered at his Oaſts
House of Colebrooke, who alſo had murdred many
before him, and how their Wickedneſſe was at length
revealed. CHAP. 11.*

THOMAS of Reading hauing many Occasions to come to London, as well about his own Affaires, as also the Kings Busineſſe, being in a great Office vnder his Maiestie, it chanced on a Time, that his Oaſt and Oaſteſſe of Colebrooke, who through Couetouſneſſe had murdered many of the Guests, and hauing euery Time he came thither great Store of his Money to lay vp, appointed him to be the next fat Pig that ſhould be killed : For it is to be vnderſtood, that when they plotted the Murder of any Man, this was alwaies their Terme, the Man to his Wife, and the Woman to her

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her Husband : Wife, there is now a fat Pig to be had if you want one. Whereupon she would answer thus, I pray you put him in the Hogstie till To-morrow. This was when any Man came thither alone without Others in his Company, and they saw he had great Store of Money.

This Man should be then laid in the Chamber right ouer the Kitchen, which was a faire Chamber, & the better set out than any other in the House : the best Bedstead therein, though it were little and low, yet was it most cunningly carued, and faire to the Eye, the Feet whereof were fast naild to the Chamber Floore in such Sort, that it could not in any wise fall ; the Bed that lay therein was fast sowed to the Sides of the Bedstead : Moreouer, that Part of the Chamber whereupon this Bed and Bedstead stood was made in such Sort, that by the pulling out of Two Yron Pinnes below in the Kitchen, it was to be let downe and taken vp by a Draw-bridge, or in Manner of a Trap-doore : moreouer in the Kitchen, directly vnder the Place where this should fall, was a mighty great Caldron, wherein they vsed to seethe their Liquor when they went to Brewing. Now the Men appointed for the Slaughter were laid into this Bed, and in the dead Time of the Night, when they were found asleepe, by plucking out the foresaid Yron Pinnes, downe will the Man fall out of his Bed into the boyling Caldron, and

all

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all the Cloaths that were vpon him: where being suddenly scalded and drowned, he was neuer able to cry or speake one Word.

Then had they a little Ladder euer standing ready in the Kitchen, by the which they presently mounted into the said Chamber, and there closely take away the Mans Apparell, as also his Money, in his Male or Cap-case: and then lifting vp the said Falling-Floore, which hung by Hinges, they made it fast as before.

The dead Body would they take presently out of the Caldron, and throw it down the River, which ran neere vnto their House, whereby they escaped all Danger.

Now if in the Morning any of the Rest of the Guests that had talkt with the murdered Man ore Eue, chanst to aske for him, as hauing Occasion to ride the same Way that he should haue done, the Good-man would answere, that he tooke Horfe a good while before Day, and that he himselfe did set him forward: the Horse the Good-man would also take out of the Stable, & conuey him by a Hay-barne of his, that stood from his House a Mile or Two, whereof himselfe did alwaies keepe the Keies full charily, and when any Hay was to be brought from thence, with his owne Hands he would deliuer it: then before the Horfe should goe from thence, he would dismarke him: as if he ware a long Taile, he would make him curtall: or else crop

of Thomas of Reading.

crop his Eares, or cut his Mane, or put out One of his Eies ; and by this Meanes hee kept himselfe vnknowne.

Now, *Thomas of Reading*, as I said before, being markt, & kept for a fat Pig, he was laid in the same Chamber of Death, but by Reason *Gray of Gloucester* chanced also to come that Night, he escaped scalding.

The next Time he came, he was laid there againe, but before he fell asleepe, or was warme in his Bed, one came riding thorow the Towne, and cryed piteously, that London was all on a Fire, and that it had burned downe *Thomas Becket's* House in West-cheape, and a great Number more in the same Street, and yet (quoth he) the Fire is not quencht.

Which Tidings when *Thomas of Reading* heard, he was very sorrowfull, for of the same *Becket* that Day he had receiued a great Peece of Money, and had left in his House many of his Writings, and some that appertained to the King also : therefore there was no way but he would ride backe againe to London prently, to see how the Matter stood, thereupon making himselfe ready, departed. This croffe Fortune caused his Oast to frowne, neuertheleffe the next Time (qd. he) will pay for all.

Notwithstanding God so wrought that they were prevented the likewife, by Reason of a great Fray that hapned

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hapned in the House betwixt a Couple that fell out at Dice, insomuch as the Murderers themselues were inforced to call him vp, being a Man in great Authority, that he might set the Houfe in Quietnesse, out of the which, by Meanes of this Quarrell, they doubted to lose many Things.

Another Time, when hee should haue beene laid in the same Place, he fell so sicke, that he requested to haue some body to watch with him, whereby also they could not bring their vile Purpofe to passe. But hard it is to escape the ill Fortunes whereunto a Man is allotted : for albeit that the next Time that he came to London, his Horfe stumbled & broke One of his Legs as he should ride homeward, yet hired he another to haften his owne Death ; for there is no Remedy but he should goe to Colebrooke that Night : but by the Way he was heauy asleepe, that he could scant keepe himselfe in the Saddle ; and when he came neere vnto the Towne, his Nose burst out suddenly a Bleeding.

Well, to his Inne he came, and so heauy was his Heart that he could eate no Meat : his Oast and Oasteffe hearing he was so melancholy, came vp to cheare him, saying, Jesuſ, Master *Cole*, what ayles you to-night ? neuer did we fee you thus sad before : will it please you to haue a Quart of burnt Sacke ? With a good Will (quoth he) and would to God *Tom Doue* were

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were here, he would surely make me merry, and we should lacke no Musicke: but I am sorry for the Man with all my Heart, that he is come so farre behind Hand: but, alas, so much can euery Man fay, but what Good doth it him? No, no, it is not Words can helpe a Man in this Case, the Man had need of other Reliefe then so. Let me see: I haue but one Child in the World, and that is my Daughter, and Half that I haue is hers, the other Halfe my Wifes. What then? shall I be good to no body but them? In Conscience, my Wealth is too much for a Couple to posseſſe, and what is our Religion without Charity? And to whom is Charity more to be shewne, then to decaid Householders?

Good my Oaſt, lend me a Pen and Inke, and ſome Paper, for I will write a Letter vnto the poore Man ſtraight; & Something I will giue him: That Almes which a Man beſtowes with his owne Hands, he ſhall be fure to haue deliuered, and God knowes how long I ſhall liue.

With that, his Oaſteſſe diſemblingly anſwered, faying, Doubt not, Master *Cole*, you are like enough by the Course of Nature to liue many Yeeres. God knowes (quoth he) I neuer found my Heart ſo heauy before. By this Time Pen, Inke, and Paper was brought, ſetting himſelfe in writing as followeth.

In

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IN the Name of God, Amen. I bequeath my Soule to God, and my Body to the Ground, my Goods equally betweene my Wife *Elenor*, and *Isabel* my Daughter. Item, I giue to *Thomas Doue* of Exeter, One Hundred Pounds ; nay, that is too little, I giue to *Thomas Doue* Two Hundred Pounds in Money, to be paid vnto him presently vpon his Demand thereof, by my said Wife and Daughter.

Ha, how say you, Oast, (qd. he) is not this well ? I pray you reade it. His Oast looking thereon, said, Why, Master *Cole*, what haue you written here ? you said you would write a Letter, but me thinks you haue made a Will ; what need haue you to doe thus ? Thanks be to God, you may liue many faire Yeeres. Tis true, (quoth *Cole*) if it please God, and I trust this Writing cannot shorten my Daies ; but let me see, haue I made a Will ? Now, I promise you, I did verily purpose to write a Letter : notwithstanding, I haue written that that God put into my Mind : but looke once againe, my Oast, is it not written there, that *Doue* shall haue Two Hundred Pounds, to be paid when he comes to demand it ? Yes, indeed, said his Oaste. Well then, all is well, said *Cole*, and it shall goe as it is for me. I will not bestow the new Writing thereof any more.

Then

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Then folding it vp, he fealed it, desiring that his Oast would send it to Exeter : he promised that he would, notwithstanding *Cole* was not satisfied : but after some Pause, he would needs hire one to carry it. And so sitting downe sadly in his Chaire againe, vpon a sudden he burst forth a weeping ; they demanding the Caufe thereof, he spake as followeth :

No Caufe of theſe Feares I know : but it comes now into my Minde, (ſaid *Cole*) when I ſet toward this my laſt Journey to London, how my Daughter tooke on, what a Coyle ſhe kept to haue me stay : and I could not be rid of the little Baggage a long Time, ſhe did ſo hang about me ; when her Mother by Violence tooke her away, ſhe cried out moſt mainly, O my Father, my Father, I ſhall neuer ſee him againe.

Alas, pretty Soule, ſaid his Oaſteſſe, this was but meere Kindneſſe in the Girle, and it ſeemeth ſhe is very fond of you. But, alas, why ſhould you grieue at this ? you muſt conſider that it was but Childiſhneſſe. I, it is indeed, ſaid *Cole*, and with that he began to nod. Then they asked him if he would goe to Bed. No, ſaid he, although I am heauy, I haue no Mind to goe to Bed at all. With that certaine Muſicians of the Towne came to the Chamber, and know- ing Maſter *Cole* was there, drue out their Instruments, and very ſolemly began to play.

This

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This Musicke comes uery well (said *Cole*) and when he had listned a while thereunto, he said, Me thinks these Instrumēts found like the Ring of St. *Mary Oueries* Bells ; but the Base drowns all the Rest : & in my Eare it goes like a Bell that rings a frozen Ones Knell, for Gods Sake let them leaue off, and beare them this simple Reward. The Musicians being gone, his Oast asked, if now it would please him to go t Bed ; for (quoth he) it is wel neere Eleuen of the Clocke.

With that *Cole*, beholding his Oast & Oastesse earnestly, began to start backe, saying, What aile you to looke so like pale Death ? good Lord ! what haue you done, that your Hands are thus bloody ? What, my Hands ? said his Oast ; why you may fee they are neither bloody nor foule : either your Eyes doe greatly dazell, or else Fancies of a troubled Minde doe delude you.

Alas, my Oast, you may fee, said hee, how weake my Wits are ; I neuer had my Head so idle before. Come, let me drinke once more, and then I will to Bed, and trouble you no longer. With that hee made himselfe vnready, and his Oastesse was very diligent to warme a Kerchiffe, and put it about his Head. Good Lord ! said he, I am not sicke, I praise God ; but such an Alteration I finde in my selfe as I neuer did before.

With

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With that the Scritch-Owle cried pitiously, and anon after the Night-Rauen fete croking hard by his Window. Jesu, haue Mercy upon me, quoth hee, what an ill-fauoured Cry doe yonder Carrion-Birds make, and therewithall he laid him downe in his Bed, from whence he neuer rose againe.

His Oast and Oastesse, that all this while noted his troubled Mind, began to commune betwixt themselues thereof. And the Man said, he knew not what were best to be done. By my Consent (quoth he) the Matter should passe, for I thinke it is not best to meddle on him. What, Man, quoth she, faint you now? haue you done so many, and doe you shrinke at this? Then shewing him a great deale of Gold which *Cole* had left with her, she said, Would it not grieue a Bodies Heart to lose this? Hang the old Churle, what should he doe liuing any longer? he hath too much, and we haue too little: tut, Husband, let the Thing be done, and then this is our owne.

Her wicked Counfell was followed, and when they had listned at his Chamber-Doore, they heard the Man sound asleepe: All is safe, quoth they, and downe into the Kitchen they goe, their Seruants being all in Bed, and pulling out the Yron Pins, downe fell the Bed, and the Man dropt out into the boyling Caldron. He being dead, they betwixt them cast his Body into the Riuier; his Clothes they made away, & made all
Things

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Things as it should be: but when he came to the Stable to conuey thence *Coles* Horse, the Stable-doore being open, the Horse had got loose, and with a Part of the Halter about his Necke, and Straw trussed vnder his Belly, as the Ostlers had dressed him ore Eue, he was gone out at the Back-fide, which led into a great Field ioyning to the House, and so leaping diuers Hedges, being a lustie stout Horse, had got into a Ground where a Mare was grazing, with whom he kept such a Coile, that they got into the High-way, where One of the Towne meeting them, knew the Mare, and brought her and the Horse to the Man that owed her.

In the meane Space the Musicians had beene at the Inne, and in Requitall of their Euenings Gift, they intended to giue *Cole* some Musick in the Morning. The Good-man told them he tooke Horse before Day: likewise there was a Guest in the Houfe that would haue bore him Company to Reading, vnto whom the Oast also answered, that he himselfe set him vpon Horsebacke, and that he went long agoe. Anon came the Man that owed the Mare, inquiring vp and downe, to know and if none of them misſed a Horse, who said no. At the laſt he came to the Signe of the Crane, where *Cole* lay: and calling the Oastlers, he demanded of them if they lackt none, they said no: Why then, ſaid the Man, I perceiue my Mare is good for Something

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Something, for if I send her to Field single, she will come Home double. Thus it passed on all that Day and the Night following : but the next Day after, *Coles* Wife, musing that her Husband came not Home, sent one of her Men on Horse-backe, to see if he could meet him : and if (quoth she) you meet him not betwixt this and Colebrooke, aske for him at the Crane ; but if you find him not there, then ride to London, for I doubt he is either sicke, or else some Mischance hath fallen vnto him.

The Fellow did so, and asking for him at Colebrooke, they answered, hee went homeward from thence such a Day. The Seruant musing what should be become of his Master, and making much Inquiry in the Towne for him, at length One told him of a Horse that was found on the High-way, and no Man knew whence he came. He going to see the Horse, knew him prestently, and to the Crane he goes with him. The Oast of the House perciuing this, was blanke, and that Night fled secretly away. The Fellow going vnto the Justice, desired his Helpe : prestently after Word was brought that *Iarman* of the Crane was gone ; then all the Men said, he had sure made *Cole* away : & the Musicians told what *Iarman* said to them, when they would haue giuen *Cole* Musick. Then the Woman being apprehended & examined, confessed the Truth. *Iarman* soone after was taken in Windsor

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Forest, he and his Wife were both hangd, after they had laid open al these Things before expreffed. Alfo he confefed, that he being a Carpenter, made that false Falling-Floore, and how his Wife deuised it. And how they had murdered by that Meanes ix. Persons. And yet, notwithstanding all the Money which they had gotten thereby, they prospered not, but at their Death were found very farre in Debt.

When the King heard of this Murder, he was for the Space of vii. Dayes fo sorrowfull and heauie, as he would not heare any Suite, giuing alfo Commandment, that the House shoulde quite be consumed with Fire wherein *Cole* was murdered, and that no Man shoulde euer build vpon that cursed Ground.

Coles Substance at his Death was exceeding great ; hee had daily in his House an Hundred Men Seruants and xl. Maides ; hee maintained beside aboue Two or Three Hundred People, Spinners and Carders, and a great many other House-holders. His Wife neuer after married, and at her Death shée bestowed a mightie Summe of Money toward the maintaining of the new-builded Monastery. Her Daughter was most richly married to a Gentleman of great Worship, by whom she had many Children. And fome fay, that the Riuier whereinto *Cole* was cast, did euer fince carrie the Name of *Cole*, being called, The Riuier of *Cole*, and the Towne of Colebrooke.

How

of Thomas of Reading.

*How diuers of the Clothiers Wiues went to the Churching
of Suttons Wife of Salisbury, & of their Merriment.*

CHAP. 12.

SUTTONS Wife of Salisbury, which had lately bin deliuered of a Sonne, against her going to Church prepared great Cheare : at what Time *Simons* Wife of Southampton came thither, and so did diuers others of the Clothiers Wiues, onely to make merry at this Churching Feast : and whilst these Dames sat at the Table, *Crab*, *Weasell*, and *Wren*, waited on the Boord ; and as the old Proverbe speaketh, Many Women many Words, so fell it out at that Time : for there was such Prattling that it passed : some talkt of their Husbands Frowardnes, some shewed their Maids Slutishnes, other some deciphered the Costlines of their Garments, some told many Tales of their Neighbours : and, to be briefe, there was none of them but would haue talke for a whole Day.

But when *Crab*, *Weasell*, and *Wren* saw this, they concluded betwixt themselves, that as oft as any of the Women had a good Bit of Meate on their Trenchers, they offering a clean one, should catch that Commodity, and so they did : but the Women, being busie in Talke, marked it not, till at the last one found Leisure to misse her Meat : whereupon she said, that their

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their Boldnesse exceeded their Diligence. Not so, forsooth, said *Weafell*, there is an Hundred bolder than we. Name me One, said the Woman, if you can. A Flea is bolder, quoth *Crabbe*. How will you proue that? said the Woman. Because, quoth he, they will creepe vnder your Coates, where we dare not come, and now and then bite you by the Buttocks, as if they were Brawne. But what becomes of them? qd. the Woman; their sweet Meat hath fowre Sauce, and their Lustines doth often cost them their Liues, therefore take Heed. A good Warning of a faire Woman, said *Wren*, but I had not thought so fine a Wit in a fat Belly.

The Women seeing their Men so merry, said it was a Signe there was good Ale in the House. Thats as fit for a Churching, quoth *Weafell*, as a Cudgell for a curst Queane. Thus with pleafant Communication and merry Quips they droue out the Time, till the Fruit and Spice-Cakes were set on the Boord: At what Time one of them began to ask the other, if they heard not of the cruell Murder of *Thomas of Reading*? What, said the Rest, is old *Cole* murdred? when, I pray you, was the Deed done? The other answered, On Friday last. O good Lord! said the Woman, how was it done, can you tell?

As Report goes, said the other, he was rosted aliue. O pitifull! was hee roasted? Indeed I heard one say,
a Man

of Thomas of Reading.

a Man was murdred at London, and that hee was fodden at an Inholders Housse, and serued it to the Guests in stead of Porke.

No, Neighbour, it was not at London, said another : I heare say twas comming from London, at a Place called Colebrooke ; and it is reported for Truth, that the Inholder made Pies of him and Penny Pasties, yea, and made his owne Seruant eate a Piece of him. But I pray you, good Neighbour, can you tell how it was knowne : some say that a Horse reuealed it.

Now, by the Mass, (quoth *Grayes* Wife) it was told one of my Neighbours, that a certaine Horse did speake, and told great Things. That sounds like a Lie, said one of them. Why, said another, may not a Horse speake, as well as *Balaams* Ass ? It may be, but it is vnlikely, said the Third. But where was the Horse when he spake ? As some say, qd. she, he was in the Field, and had broke out of the Stable, where he stood fast locked in mighty strong Yron Fetteres, which hee burst in Peeces, as they had beene Strawes, and broke downe the Stable-Doore, and so got away. The Goodman comming in at these Speeches, asked what that was they talkt of. Marry, said his Wife, wee heare that *Cole* of Reading is murdred. I pray you is it true ? I, said *Sutton*, it is true ; that vile Villaine his Oast murdered him, in whose House the Man had spent many a Pound. But did they make Pies of him ?

faid

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said his Wife. No, no, quoth her Husband ; he was scalded to death in a boiling Caldron, and afterward throwne into a running Riuer that is hard by. But, good Husband, how was it knowne ? By his Horse, quoth hee. What, did he tell his Master was murder-ed ? could the Horse speake English ? Jesus, what a foolish Woman are you, quoth he, to aske such a question. But, to end this, you are all heartily welcome, good Neighbours, and I am forry you had no better Cheere. So with Thanks the Women departed. Thus haue yee heard the diuers Tales that will be spred Abroad of an euil Deed.

How Duke Robert deceiued his Keepers, & got from them : how he met faire Margaret, and in carrying her away was taken, for the which he had his Eyes put out. CHAP. 13.

DUKE Robert hauing, as you heard, obtained the Loue of faire *Margaret*, did now cast in his Mind how hee might delude his Keepers, and carry her quite away. In the End, he being absolutely resolued what to doe, sent his Letter vnto her, wherein he requested, that she would be readie to meet him in the Forrest, betwixt Cardiffe and *Glocester*.

The young Lady, hauing secretly receiued his Message, vnknowne to her Master or Dame, in a Morning betime

of Thomas of Reading.

betime made her ready and got forth, walking to the appointed Place, where her Loue should meet her.

During her Abode there, and thinking long ere her Loue came, she entred into diuers Passions, which indeed presaged some disaster Fortune to follow. O my deare Loue, said she, how slacke art thou in performing thy Promise! Why doe not thy Deedes agree with thy Inditing? See, these are thy Words, Come, my deare *Margaret*, and with *Cupids* swift Wings flie to thy Friend; be now as nimble in thy Footing as the Camels of Bactria, that runne an Hundred Miles a Day: I will waite and stay for thee, so I stay not too long. There is no Country like Austria for ambling Horses, & to carry thee I haue got one.

O my Loue, (quoth she) here am I, but where art thou? O why doest thou play the Trewant with Time, who like the Wind slides away vnseene? An ambling Gennet of Spaine is too slow to serue our Turnes. A flying Horse for flying Louers were most meete. And thus casting many Looke thorow the Siluane Shades vp and downe to espie him, she thought euery Minute an Houre, till she might see him: sometimes she would wish her selfe a Bird, that she might fly through the Ayre to meeete him; or a pretty Squirill, to clime the highest Tree to descry his comming: but finding her Wishes vaine, she began thus to excuse him, and perswaded her selfe, saying,

How

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How much to blame am I, to finde fault with my Friend? Alas, Men that lacke their Liberty, must come when they can, not when they would; poore Prisoners cannot doe what they desire; and then why should I be so hastie? Therefore, if safely I may lay me downe, I will beguile vnquiet Thoughts with quiet Sleepe: it is said that *Galino* breeds no Serpents, nor doth Englands Forrests nourish Beares or Lyons, therefore, without Hurt I hope I may rest awhile. Thus leauing faire *Margaret* in a sweet Slumber, we will returne to Duke *Robert*, who had thus plotted his Escape from his Keepers.

Hauing Liberty of the King to hawke and hunt, hee determined on a Day, as hee should follow the Chafe, to leauue the Hounds to the Hart, and the Hunters to their Hornes, and being busie in their Sport, himselfe would flie, which hee performed at that Time when he appointed *Margaret* to meeete him, and so comming to the Place, his Horfe all on a Water, and himselfe in a Sweat, finding his Loue asleepe, he awaked her with a Kiffe, faying, Arise, faire *Margaret*, now comes the Time wherein thou shalt be made a Queene: and prefently setting her on Horfesbacke, he posted away.

Now when the Keepers saw they had lost his Company, and that at the killing of the Game hee was not present, they were among themselues in such a Mutiny,
that

of Thomas of Reading.

that they were ready one to stabbe another. It was thy Fault, said one, that hee thus escapt from vs, that hadst more mind of thy Pleasure then of thy Prisoner, and by this Meanes we are all undone. The other said as much to him, that he had thought he had followed him in the Chase: but leauing at last this Contention, the one posted vp to the King, while the Others coasted vp and downe the Country to search for the Duke, who hauing kild his Horse in travelling, was most vnhappily mette on Foot with faire *Margaret*, ere he could come to any Towne, where he might for Money haue another. But when he espyed his Keepers come to take him, he desired *Margaret* to make Shift for her selfe, and to seeke to escape them. But she being of a contrary Mind, said, she would liue and die with him.

The Duke, seeing himselfe ready to be surprized, drew out his Sword, and said, he would buy his Liberty with his Life, before he would yeeld to be any more a Prisoner ; and thereupon began a great Fight betwixt them, insomuch that the Duke had killed Two of them : but himselfe being fore wounded, and faint with ouermuch bleeding, at length fell downe, being not able any longer to stand : and by this Meanes the good Duke was taken with his faire Loue, & both of them committed to Prison.

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miffed her Maide, and saw she was quite gone, she made great Lamentation for her among her Neighbours, for she loued her as dearely as any Child that euer she bore of her owne Body. *O Margaret,* (quoth shee) what Cause hadst thou thus to leaue me? If thou didst mislike any Thing, why didst thou not tell me? If thy Wages were too little, I would haue mended it: If thy Apparell had beene too simple, thou shouldest haue had better: If thy Worke had bin too great, I would haue had Helpe for thee.

Farewell, my sweet *Meg*, the best Seruant that euer came in any Mans House; many may I haue of thy Name, but neuer any of thy Nature: thy Diligence is much; in thy Hands I laid the whole Gouernment of my House, and thereby eased my selfe of that Care which now will cumber me.

Heere shee hath left me my Keyes vnto my Chests, but my Comfort is gone with her Prefence: euery gentle Word that she was wont to speake, comes now into my Mind; her courteous Behauour shall I neuer forget: with how sweet and modest a Countenance would she qualifie my ouer-hastie Nature? It repents my Heart that euer I spoke foule Word vnto her. *O Meg,* wert thou here againe, I would neuer chide thee more: but I was an vnworthy Dame for such a Seruant. What will become of me now, if I should chance

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chance to be fiske, seeing she is gone, that was wont to be both my Apoticky and Physician ?

Well, quoth her Neighbours, there is no Remedy now but to rest content ; you shall one Day heare of her, doubt you not ; and thinke this, that she was not so good but you may get another as good, and therefore do not take it so heauily. O Neighbour, blame me not to grieue, seeing I haue lost so great a Iewell, and sure I am perswaded, that scant in a Bodies Lifetime they shall meet with the like.

I protest I would circuit England round about on my bare Feet to meet with her againe. O, my *Meg* was surely stole away from me, else would she not haue gone in such Sort. Her Husband, on the other Side, grieued as much, & rested not Night nor Day, riding vp and downe to feeke her : but she, poore Soule ! is fast lockt vp in Prison, and therefore cannot be met withall.

But when the King vnderstood of his Brothers Escape, hee was maruelous wroth, giuing great Charge and Commandement when he was taken, that both his Eyes should be put out, and be kept in Prison till his dying Day : appointing also that the Maid should lose her Life for Presumption of louing him.

This Matter being rumored ouer all England, it came to the Eares of *Gray* & his Wife, who hearing that *Margaret* also was there in Prison appointed to die,

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die, the good aged Woman neuer rested till she came to the Court, where kneeling before the King, with many Teares she besought his Maiestie to spare the Maidens Life, saying, Most royll King, consider, I humbly beseech you, that the Duke your Brother was able to intice any Woman to his Loue, much more a filly Maiden, especially promising her Marriage, to make her a Lady, a Dutcheffe, or a Queene, who would refuse such an Offer, when at the Instant they might get both a princely Husband and a high Dignity? If Death be a Louers Guerdon, then what is due to Hatred? I am in my Heart perswaded, that had my poore *Margaret* thought it would haue bred your Highnes Displeasure, she would neuer haue bought his Loue so deare. Had your Grace made it known to your Commons, that it was unlawfull for any to marry the Duke your Brother, who would haue attempted such an Action? If she had wilfully disobeyed your Graces Commandement, she might haue been thought worthy of Death; but seeing ignorantly she offended, I beseech your Grace to recall the Sentence, and let me still enioy my Seruant, for neuer will I rise till your Majestie haue granted my Petition.

His Highnes, who was of Nature mercifull, beholding the Womans abundant Tears, tooke Pitie on her, and granted her Suite: which being obtained, shee went Home in all Haste possible. And from thence
shee,

of Thomas of Reading.

shee, with her Husband, taking their Iourney to Cardiffe Castle, they came at that very Instant when the Maiden was led toward her Death, who went in most ioyfull Sort to the same, saying, that they were not worthy to be accounted true Louers that were not willing to die for Loue: and so with a smiling Countenance shee passed on, as if shee had eaten *Apium Rijus*, which causeth a Man to die laughing: but her Dame *Gray* seeing her, fell about her Necke, and with many Kisses imbraced her, saying, Thou shalt not die, my Wench, but goe Home with me; and for thy Deliuerie behold here the Kings Letters; and with that shee deliuered them vp to the Gouernour of the Castle, who reading them, found these Words written, Wee pardon the Maids Life, and grant her Liberty; but let her not passe till shee see her Louers Eyes put out, which we will haue you doe in such Sort, that not onely the Sight may perish, but the Eye continue faire, for which Cause I haue sent downe Doctor *Piero*, that he may execute the same.

The Gouernour of the Castle hauing read the Kings Letter, said thus to the Maiden, The Kings Maiestie hath pardoned thy Life, and allowed thy Liberty: but you must not passe before you see your Louers Eyes put out. O Sir, said the Maiden, mistake not your selfe, they are my Eyes that must be put out, and not the

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the Dukes : as his Offence grew by my Meanes, so I
being guilty, ought to receiue the Punishment.

The Kings Commandement must be fulfilled, said
the Gouernour : and therewithall Duke *Robert* was
brought forth, who hearing that he must lose his Eyes,
said thus : The noble Mind is neuer conquered by
Griefe, nor ouercome by Mischance : but as the Hart
reneweth his Age by eating the Serpent, so doth a
Man lengthen his Life with deuouring Sorrow : my
Eyes haue offended the King, and they must be pu-
nished : my Heart is in great Fault, why is not that
killed ?

The Kings Maiesty, said the Gouernour, spares
your Life of meere Loue, and onely is content to sa-
tisfie the Law with the Loffe of your Eyes ; wherfore
take in good Part this Punishment, and thinke you
haue deserued greater then is granted.

With this *Margaret* cryed out, saying, O my deare
Loue, most gentle Prince, well may you wish that I
had neuer bin borne, who by seeing of mee must lose
your Sight : but happie should I count my selfe, if it
so please the King, that I might redeeme thy Eyes with
my Life : or else, that being an equall Offendor, I
might receiue equall Punishment : hadst thou sustaine-
d this Smart for some Queene or Princeffe of high
Blood, it might with the more Ease be borne, but to
indure

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indure it for such a one as I, it must needs cause a treble Grief to be increased.

Content thee, faire *Margaret*, said the Duke ; for Honor ought to be giuen to Virtue, & not Riches : for Glory, Honor, Nobility and Riches, without Virtue, are but Clokes of Maliciousnes. And now let me take my Leaue of thy Beauty, for neuer must I behold thy Face : notwithstanding I account my Eyes well lost, in that I doe forgoe them for so peereles a Paragon. Now, faire Heauens, farewell ! the Sunne, Moone, and Starres shall I in this World neuer behold againe ; and farewell also the fruitfull Earth : well may I feele thee, but those poore Windowes of my Body are now denied to view thee any more : and though the Worlde hath euer bin my Foe, yet will I bid thee farewell too, & farewell all my Friends : whiles I liue here in this World, I must suppose to sleepe, & wake when I come in Heauen, where I hope to see you all againe. Yet had it pleased the King, I had rather haue lost my Life then my Eyes. Life, why, what is it but a Flowre, a Bubble in the Water, a Spanne long, and full of Miserie ? Of such small Account is Life, that euery Souldier will sell it for Sixpence. And trust me, I do now detest Life worse then a Goat doth hate Basill.

With that the Doctor prepared his Instrument, and being ready to set to the Dukes Eyes, he said, O stay,
Master

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Master Doctor, till I haue conueyed my Loues Countenance downe into my Heart : Come hither, my Sweet, and let me giue thee my last Kiffe, while mine Eyes may direct me to thy Cherry Lips. Then imbracing her in his Armes, he said, O that I might giue thee a Kiffe of xx. Yeeres long, and to satisfie my Eyes with thy Sight : yet it doth somewhat content me, because thou art present at my Punishment, that I may hold thee by the Hand, to comfort my Heart, at the sudden Pricke of my Eye.

This being said, the Doctor performed his Duty, and so put out the christall Sight : at what Time D. *Robert* started up, and with a most manly Courage said, I must thank his Maiestie, that though hee depriue me of my Sight, yet he leaueth me Eyes to weepe for my Sinnes. But so foone as *Margaret* beheld the Deed, she fell downe in a Swoone, and much a doe her Dame had to recouer her Life : which when the Duke understood, hee was wondrous woe, groping for her with his bleeding Eyes, saying, O where is my Loue ? for Gods Sake haue regard to her. And I pray you most heartily, good Wife *Gray*, let her haue this Fauour for my Sake, that she may be vsed kindly. And with that the Keepers led him into the Castle, and *Margaret* was carried away wondrous sick and ill : but her Dame was most tender ouer her ; and would suffer her to lacke nothing. When she was somewhat

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somewhat well recovered, her Dame *Gray* set her on Horsebacke : and at her comming to Gloucester, there was no small Ioy.

How Thomas Doue, being fallen to Decay, was forsaken of his Friends, & despised of his Seruants : and how in the End he was raised againe through the Liberality of the Clothiers. CHAP. 14.

SVCH as seeke the Pleasure of the World follow a Shadow wherein is no Substance : and as the Adder *Aspis* tickleth a Man to Death, so doth vaine Pleasure flatter vs, till it makes vs forget God, and consume our Substance, as by *Tom Doue* it is apparent, who had, through a free Heart and a liberall Minde, wasted his Wealth ; and looke how his Goods consumed, so his Friends fled from him : And albeit he had beene of great Ability, and thereby done good vnto many, yet no Man regarded him in his Pouerty, but casting a scornefull Countenance vpon him, they passed by him with slender Salutation : neither would any of his former Acquaintance do him Good or pleasure him with the Value of a Farthing ; his former Friendship done to them was quite forgot, and he made of as much Account as *Job* when he fate on the Dunghill.

Now when his wicked Seruants saw him in this
P Disgrace

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Disgrace with the World, they on the other Side began to disdaine him. Notwithstanding that hee (to his great Cost) had long Time brought them vp, yet did they Nothing regard it, but behind his Backe in most scornefull Sort derided him, and both in their Words and Actions greatly abuse him ; Reuerence they would doe none vnto him, but when they spake, it was in such malapert Sort, as would grieue an honest Minde to heare it.

At last it came to passe, that breaking out into meere Contempt, they said they would stay no longer with him, and that it was a great Discredit for them to serue a Person so beggerly : whereupon they thought it conuenient to seeke for their Benefits elsewhere. When the distressed Man found the Matter so plaine, being in great Griefe, he spake thus vnto them : Now do I find, to my Sorrow, the small Trust that is in this false World. Why, my Masters, (quoth he) haue you so much forgotten my former Prosperity, that you Nothing regard my present Necessity ? In your Wants I forsooke you not, in your Sicknesse I left you not, nor despised you in your great Pouerty : it is not vndeowne, though you do not consider it, that I tooke some of you vp in the High-way, othersome from your needy Parents, & brought the Rest from meere Beggery to a House of Bounty ; where from paltrie Boyes, I brought you vp to Mans State, and haue, to my great Cost, taught you a Trade, whereby you may live

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live like Men. And in Requitall of all my Courtesie, Cost, and Goodwill, will you now on a sudden forsake me? Is this the best Recompence that you can find your Hearts to yeed me?

'This is farre from the Minds of honest Seruants. The fierce Lion is kind to thofe that doe him Good: plucke but one Thorne out of his Foot, and for the fame he will shew manifold Fauors. The wild Bull will not ouerthrow his Dam: and the very Dragons are dutifull to their Nourifhers. Be better aduised, and call to Mind, I beseech you, that I haue not pluckt a Thorne out of your Feet, but drawne your whole Bodies out of Perils, and when you had no Meanes to helpe your felues, I onely was your Support, and he that, when all other forfooke you, did comfort you in all your Extremities.

And what of all this? quoth one of them; because you tooke vs vp poore, doth it therefore follow that we must be your Slaves? We are young Men, and for our Part, we are no further to regard your Profit then it may stand with our Preferment. Why should we lose our Benefit to pleasure you? If you taught vs our Trade, and brought vs vp from Boies to Men, you had our Seruice for it, whereby you made no fmall Benefit, if you had as well vsed it as we got it. But if you be poore, you may thanke your selfe, being a iuft Scourge for your Prodigalitie, and is my Opinion

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nion plaine, that to stay with you is the next Way to make vs like you, neither able to help ourselvses nor our Friends : therefore in briefe, come pay me my Wages, for I will not stay ; let the Rest do as they will, for I am resolued.

Well, said his Master, if needs thou wilt be gone, here is Part of thy Wages in Hand, & the Rest as soone as God sends it thou shalt haue it : & with that, turning to the Rest, he said, Let me yet intreat you to stay, and leaue me not altogether destitute of Help : by your Labours must I liue, and without you I know not what to doe. Consider, therefore, my Need, and regard my great Charge. And if for my Sake you will doe nothing, take Compassyon of my poore Children ; stay my sliding Foote, and let me not vtterly fall through your flying from me.

Tush, (quoth they) what do you talke to vs ? We can haue better Wages, and serue a Man of Credit, where our Farre shall be farre better, & our Gaines greater : therefore the World might count us right Coxcomes, if we should forsake our Profit to pleasure you : therefore adieu ; God send you more Money, for you are like to haue no more Men : and thus they departed.

When they were gone, within a while after they met one with another, saying, What Cheare ? are you all come away ? In faith I, what should we doe else ?

quoth

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quoth they. But hear'st thou, Sirra, hast thou got thy Wages ? Not yet, saith the Other, but I shall haue it, and that is as good ; tis but x. Shillings. Saist thou so ? (said he) now I see thou art one of God Almightyes Idiots. Why so ? said the Other. Because (quoth he) thou wilt be fed with Shales : but Ile tell thee one Thing ; twere better for thee quickly to arrest him, lest some other doing it before, and there be Nothing left to pay thy Debt : hold thy Peace, faire Words make Fooles faine, and it is an old Saying, One Bird in Hand is worth Two in Bush : if thou dost not arrest him prefently, I will not giue thee Two-pence for thy x. Shillings. • How shall I come by him ? quoth the Other : giue me but two Pots of Ale, and Ile betray him, said he. So they being agreed, this smooth-faced *Iudas* comes to his late Master, and told him that a Friend of his at the Doore would speake with him. The vnmistrusting Man, thinking no Euill, went to the Doore, where prefently an Officer arrested him at his Man's Suite.

The poore Man seeing this, being strucken into a sudden Sorrow, in the Griefe of his Heart, spake to this Effect : Ah thou lewd Fellow, Art thou the first Man that seekes to augment my Miferie ? Haue I thus long giuen thee Bread, to breed my Ouerthrow ? And nourisht thee in thy Neede, to work my Destruction ? Full little did I thinke, when thou so often diddest dip thy

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thy false Fingers in my Dish, that I gaue Food to my chiefest Foe : but what boote Complaints in these Extremes ? Goe, Wife, (quoth he,) unto my Neighbours, and see if thou canst get any of them to be my Baile. But in vaine was his Paines spent. Then he sent to his Kinsfolkes, and they denied him : to his Brother, and he would not come at him, so that there was no Shift, but to Prifon he must : but, as he was going, a Messenger met him with a Letter from Master *Cole*, wherein, as you heard, hee had promised him Two Hundred Pounds ; which when the poore Man read, hee greatly rejoyned, and shewing the same to the Officer, hee was content to take his owne Worde. Whereupon *Tom Doue* went presently to Reading, where, upon his coming, he found all the Rest of the Clothiers lamenting *Cole's* vntimely Death, where the woefull Widdou paid him the Money, by which Deed all the Rest of the Clothiers were induced to doe Something for *Doue*. And thereupon one gaue him Ten Pounds, another Twenty, another Thirtie Pounds, to begin the World anew : and by this Meanes (together with the Blessing of God) he grew into greater Credit than euer hee was before. And Riches being thus come upon him, his former Friends came fawning vnto him ; and when he had no Neede of them, then euerie one was readie to proffer him Kindnesse. His wicked Seruants also that disdained him in his Distresse, were after glad to come creeping vnto him, intreating

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treating with Cap and Knee for his Fauour and Friendship. And albeit hee seemed to forgiue their Trespasses done against him, yet hee would often say, he would neuer trust them for a Straw. And thus he euer after liued in great Wealth and Prosperitie, doing much Good to the Poore, and at his Death left to his Children great Lands.

*How faire Margaret made her Estate and high Birth
known to her Master and Dame ; & for the intire
Loue she bore to Duke Robert, made a Vow neuer to
marry, but became a Nun in the Abbey at Gloucester.
Chap. 15.*

AT FTER faire Margaret was come againe to Gloucester, neuer did she behold the cleare Day, but with a weeping Eye : and so great was the Sorrow which she conceiued for the Losse of Duke Robert, her faithfull Louer, that she vtterly despifeth all the Pleasure of this Life, and at last bewrayed her selfe in this Sort vnto her Dame.

O, my good Master and Dame, too long haue I dissembled my Parentage from you, whom the froward Destinies doe pursue to deserued Punishment. The wofull Daughter am I of the vnhappy Earl of Shrewsburie, who, euer since his Banishment, haue done Nothing but drawne Mischance after mee : wherefore let me

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me intreat you (deare Master and Dame) to haue your Good-wills to spend the Remnant of my Life in some blessed Monasterie.

When *Gray* and his Wife heard this, they wondred greatly, as well at her Birth as at her strange Demand. Whereupon her Dame knew not how to call her, whether Maiden or Madam, but said, O good Lord, are you a Ladie, and I know it not ? I am sorrie that I knew it not before. But when the Folkes of the Houfe heard that *Margaret* was a Lady, there was no small Alteration ; and moreouer, her Dame said, that she had thought to haue had a Match betweene her and her Son ; and, by many Perswasions, did seeke to withdraw her from being a Nun, saying, in this Manner : What, *Margaret*, thou art young and faire, the World (no Doubt) hath better Fortune for thee, whereby thou maist leaue an honourable Issue behind thee, in whom thou mayst liue after Death.

These, and many other Reasons, did they alledge unto her, but all in vaine, she making this Reply, Who knowes not that this World giueth the Pleasure of an Houre, but the sorrow of many Daies ? For it paith euer that which it promifeth, which is Nothing else but continuall Trouble and Vexation of the Minde. Do you think, if I had the Offer and Choice of the mightiest Princes of Christendom, that I could match my selfe better then to my Lord Jesu ? No, no, hee is

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is my Husband, to whom I yeeld my selfe, both Body and Soule, giuing to him my Heart, my Loue, and my most firme Affections : I haue ouerlong loued this vile World, therefore I beseech you farther disswade me not.

When her Friends by no Meanes could alter her Opinion, the Matter was made knowne to his Maiestie, who, against the Time that she should be receiued into the Monasterie, came to Gloucester with most Part of his Nobilitie, to honour her Action with his princely Presence.

All Things being therfore prepared, the young Lady was in most princely-wife attired in a Gowne of pure white Sattin, her Kirtle of the same, embroidered with Gold about the Skirts, in most curious Sort ; her Head was garnished with Gold, Pearles, and precious Stones, hauing her Haire like Thrids of burnisht Gold, hanging downe behind in Manner of a princely Bride ; about her Yuory Necke, Jewels of inestimable Price were hung, and her Handwrests were compassed about with Bracelets, or bright-shining Diamonds.

The Streets thorow the which she should passe were pleafantly deckt with greene Oaken Boughs ; then came the young Lady, most like an heauenly Angell, out of her Master's House, at what Time all the Bells in Gloucester were solemnly rung ; she being

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led betwixt the Kings Maiestie, hauing on his Royal Robes and Imperiall Crowne, and the Chiefe Bishop wearing his Mitre, in a Cope of Cloth of Gold, over her Head a Canopy of white Silke, fringed about in princely Manner ; before her went an Hundred Priests singing, and after her all the chiefe Ladies of the Land ; then all the Wiues and Maidens of Gloucester followed, with an innumerable Sort of People on euery Side standing to behold her. In this Sort she passed on to the Cathedrall Church, where she was brought to the Nunry Gate.

The Lady Abbeffe receiued her, where the beautifull Maiden, kneeling downe, made her Prayer in Sight of all the People ; then, with her owne Hands, she vndid her Virgins faire Gowne, and took it off, and gaue it away to the Poore, after that, her Kirtle, then her Jewels, Bracelets, and Rings, saying, Farewell the Pride and Vanitie of this World. The Ornaments of her Head were the next shee gaue away, and then was she led on one Side, where she was stripped, and, in Stead of her Smoke of softe Silke, had a Smoke of rough Haire put upon her.

Then came one with a Paire of Sheares, and cut off her Golden-coloured Locks, and with Dust and Ashes all bestrewed her Head and Face ; which being done, she was brought againe into the Peoples Sight, bare foot and bare-leg'd, to whom she said, Now, Farewell
the

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the World, Farewell the Pleasures of this Life, Farewell my Lord the King, and to the Dukes sweet Love farewell ; now shall my Eyes weepe for my former Transgressions, and no more shall my Tongue talke of Vanity ; Farewell my good Master and Dame, and Farewell all good People.

With which Words she was taken away, and neuer after seene abroad. When Duke *Robert* heard thereof, he desired that at his Death his Body might be buried in Gloucester ; in that Towne, quoth he, where first my cleare Eyes beheld the heauenly Beauty of my Loue, and where, for my Sake, shee forsooke the World ; which was performed accordingly.

The King also, at his Death, requested to be buried at Reading, for the great Loue he bare to that Place, among those Clothiers, who, liuing, were his Hearts Comfort. *Gray*, dying wondrous wealthy, gaue Land to the Monasterie whereinto *Margaret* was taken. *William Fitzallen* also dyed a most rich Man, hauing builded many Houses for the Poore ; whose Sonne, *Henry*, was the first Mayor that was euer in London.

Sutton of Salisbury did also, at his Death, much Good, and gaue an Hundred li. to be yeerly lent to poore Weauers of the Towne, to the Worlds End. *Simon* of South-hampton gave a most bounteous Gift towards the Building of a Monastery at Winchester. *Hodgkins* of Hallifax did also great Good ; and so did *Cutbert* of

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of Kendall, who had married xxiii. Couples out of his owne House, giuing each of them x.li. to beginne the World withall. *Martin Briam* of Manchester gaue toward the Building of a Free-School in Manchester, a great masse of Money. And thus (gentle Reader) haue I finished my Storie of these worthy Men, desiring thee to take my Paines in good Part, which will ingage me to greater Matters, perciuing this courteously accepted.

F I N I S.

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